

Famous Artists Course for Talented Young People

Famous Artists Schools, Inc., Westport, Connecticut

Section 16 Materials of expression

Guiding Faculty

Albert Dorne, Founder
[1904-1965]

Norman Rockwell
Al Parker
Ben Stahl
Stevan Dohanos
Jon Whitcomb
Robert Fawcett
Peter Helck
Austin Briggs
Harold Von Schmidt
George Glusti
Fred Ludekens
Bernard Fuchs
Bob Peak
Tom Allen
Lorraine Fox
Franklin McMahon

Ben Shahn
Doris Lee
Dong Kingman
Arnold Blanch
Adolf Dehn
Fletcher Martin
Will Barnet
Syd Solomon
Julian Levi
Joseph Hirsch

Milton Caniff
Al Capp
Dick Cavalli
Whitney Darrow, Jr.
Rube Goldberg
Harry Haenigsen
Willard Mullin
Virgil Partch
Barney Tobey

What is a medium?

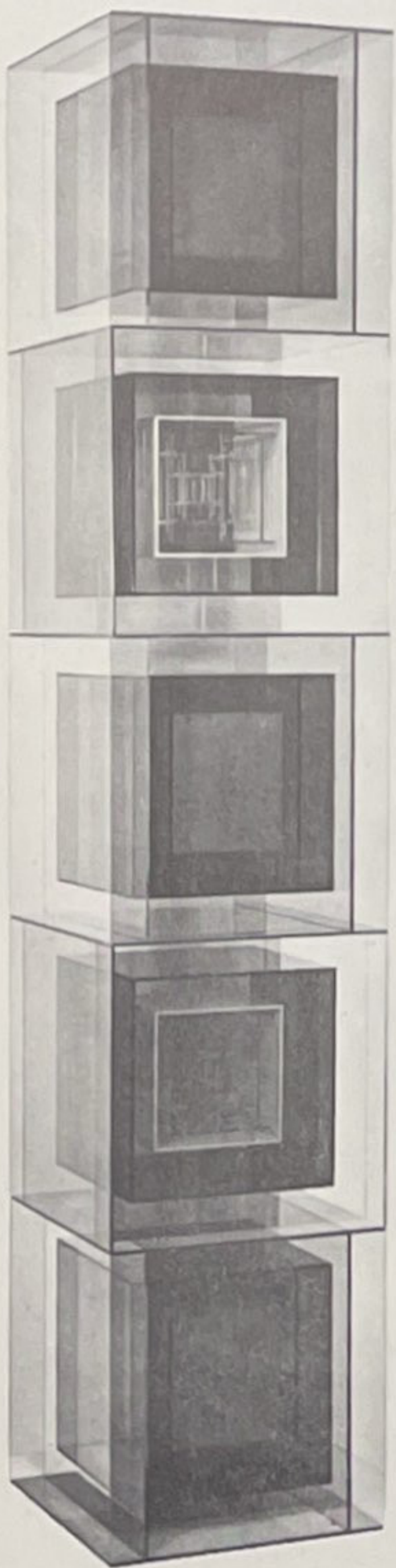
This brief question has a concise answer: a medium is any material used for expression in art. Once upon a time painters' materials consisted of watercolors, oils, tempera; a sculptor's mediums were confined to clay, wax, stone, wood and bronze. But today artists are involved also with contemporary materials—with plastic paints and pastes, with lucite, latex, plexiglas, aluminum, steel and other metals, with neon tubes and projected light. They use unheard-of combinations of unrelated materials in stunning, sometimes shocking ways. In fact, almost any medium or surface you can lay your hands on can express your views, your feelings.

Galleries and museums have exhibited welded automobile bumpers and chunks of cars intentionally crushed by artists who comment on contemporary life in this dramatic way. And sculpture no longer need be static; many pieces have been motorized, some of them even emit noises when a

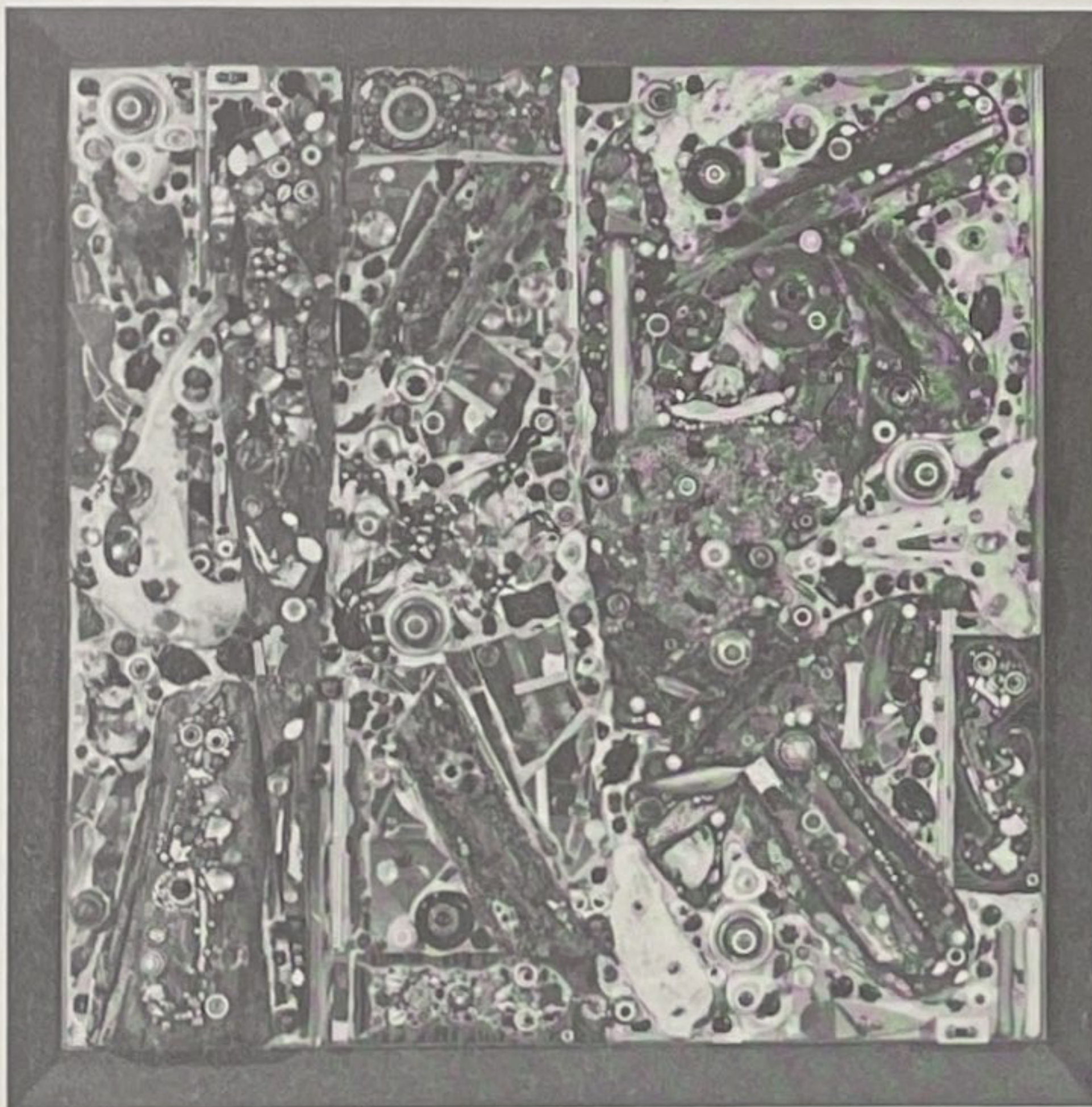
button is pushed. Canvases have taken new forms, too: artists have tautly stretched and shaped them so they seem like painted sharp-edged mountains in relief, or a canvas may have been given a third dimension with welded rods and wire. The joy of life as well as the tempo and confusion of the man-made world have been caught with many materials, in many dimensions.

Creative artists constantly try new means of expression, seeking new directions, exploring the use of new mediums. Even if you eventually settle on a traditional medium and method of working, this is an excellent time in your development as an artist to experiment—to meet and enjoy the challenge various materials present. Keep alert for the inevitable "accidents" that appear as you work—you can often take advantage of them! In painting, for instance, colors sometimes bleed together or overlap to create an ad-

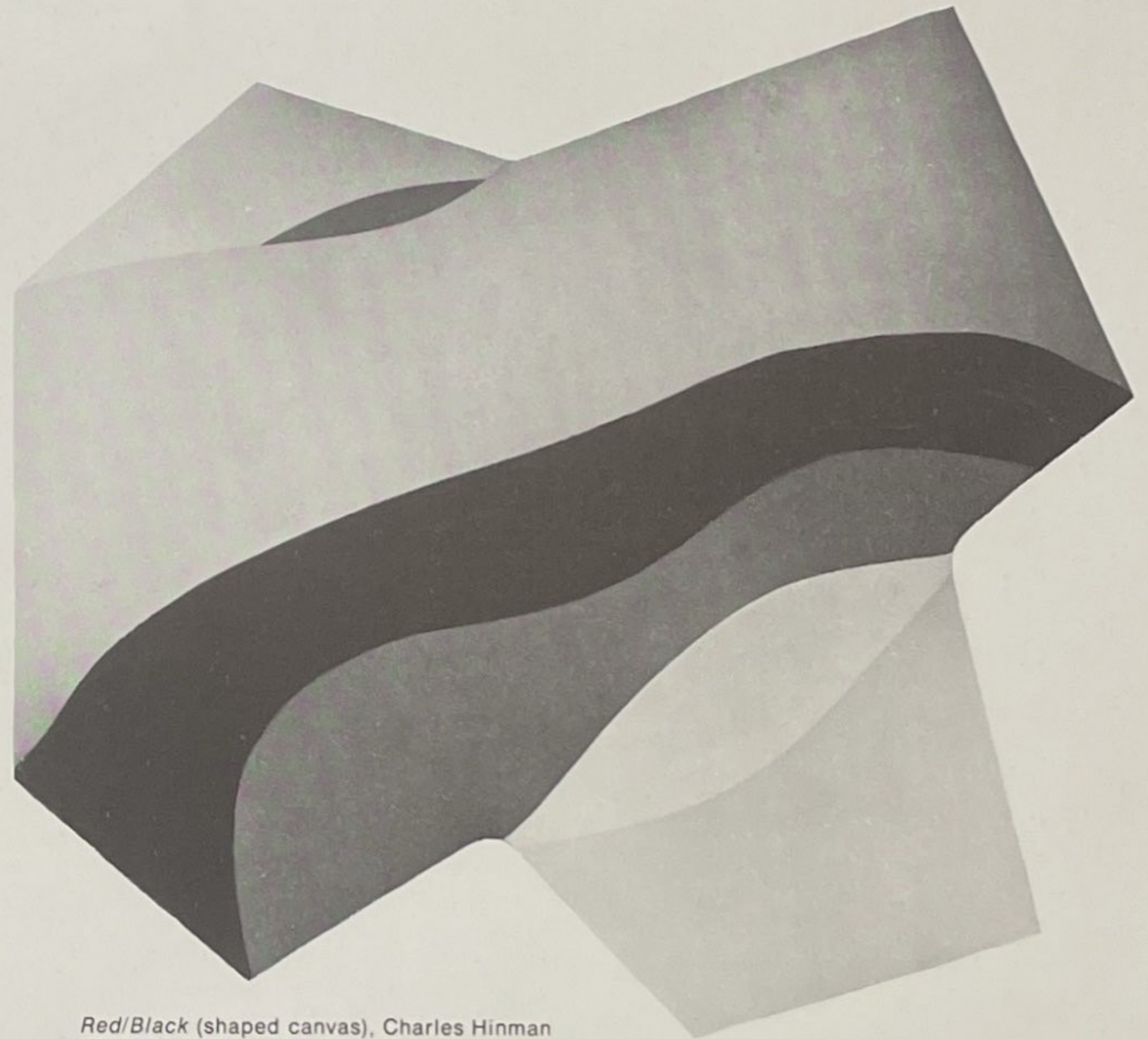
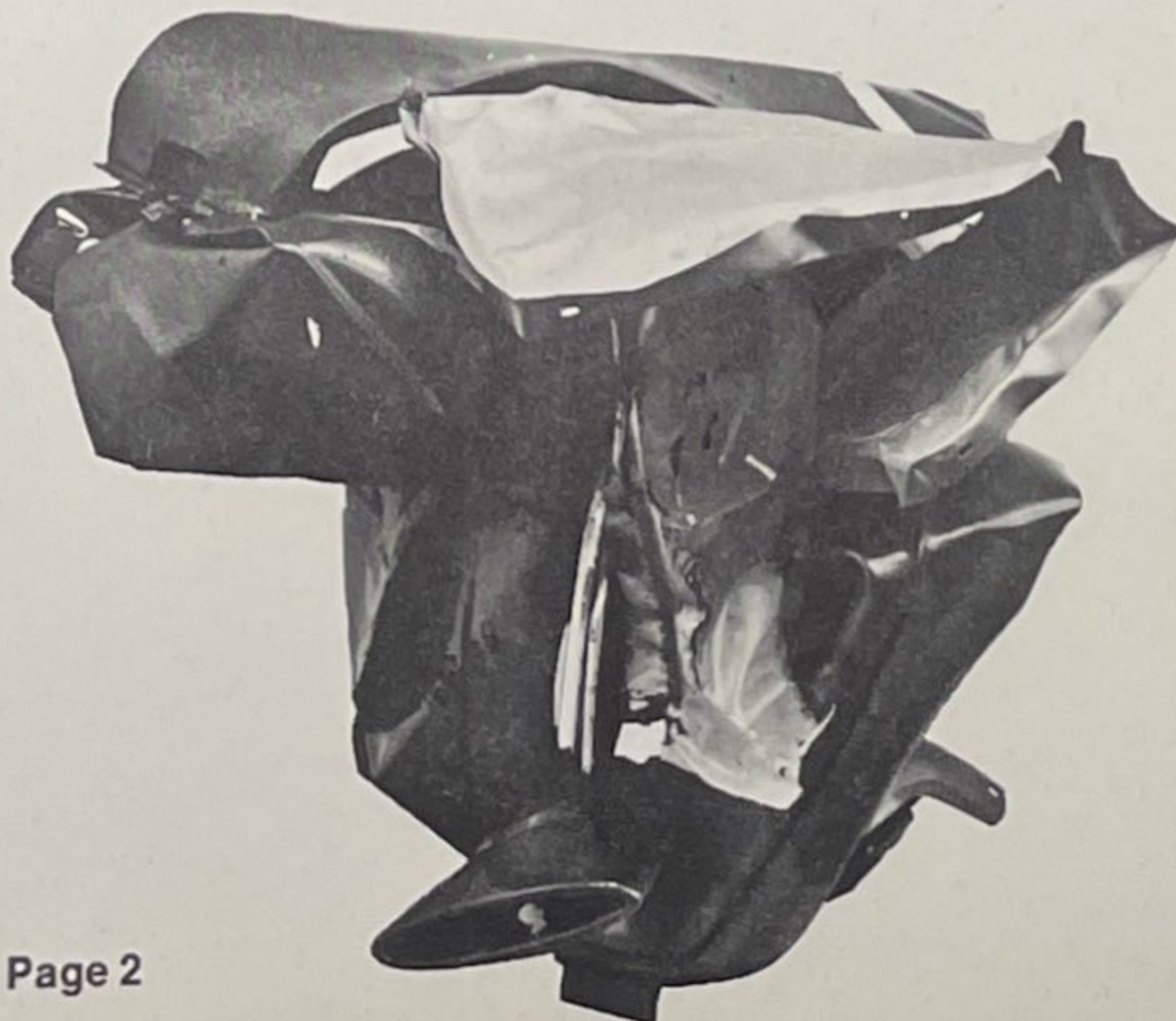
Construction #94 (plexiglas), Leroy Lamis
Courtesy Staempfli Gallery, New York



Between (assemblage: materials from chemical plants, taxidermist shops, hardware suppliers), Alfonso Ossorio
Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Gift of Howard and Jean Lipman



Sugarit '64 (paint on welded automobile metal), John Chamberlain
Courtesy Leo Castelli Gallery, New York



Red/Black (shaped canvas), Charles Hinman
Collection Krannert Art Museum
University of Illinois, Champaign



Jour de Fête: Three Views (oil on corrugated aluminum), Yaacov Agam
Courtesy Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York

mirable but unplanned effect; pencil marks or underpainting may unintentionally show through, enhancing your work. Surprises can crop up in *any* material you use, often sparking new ideas. (Take note of how—and why—these surprises occur so you can consciously use them in your later work.)

Certain mediums, tools and surfaces—you'll discover—lend themselves to ordered, deliberate painting, others to freer interpretation. You'll see how you can change the visual effect of color—the intensity, the warmth, the brashness—depending on whether you lay it on in thick impasto brushstrokes, spray it on or “paint” with a sponge. The texture of the surface and the way paint clings to it affects color, too. No matter what you attempt as you explore mediums, you'll increase your understanding of your craft. Some experiments will work, some won't; whatever happens, you will have added

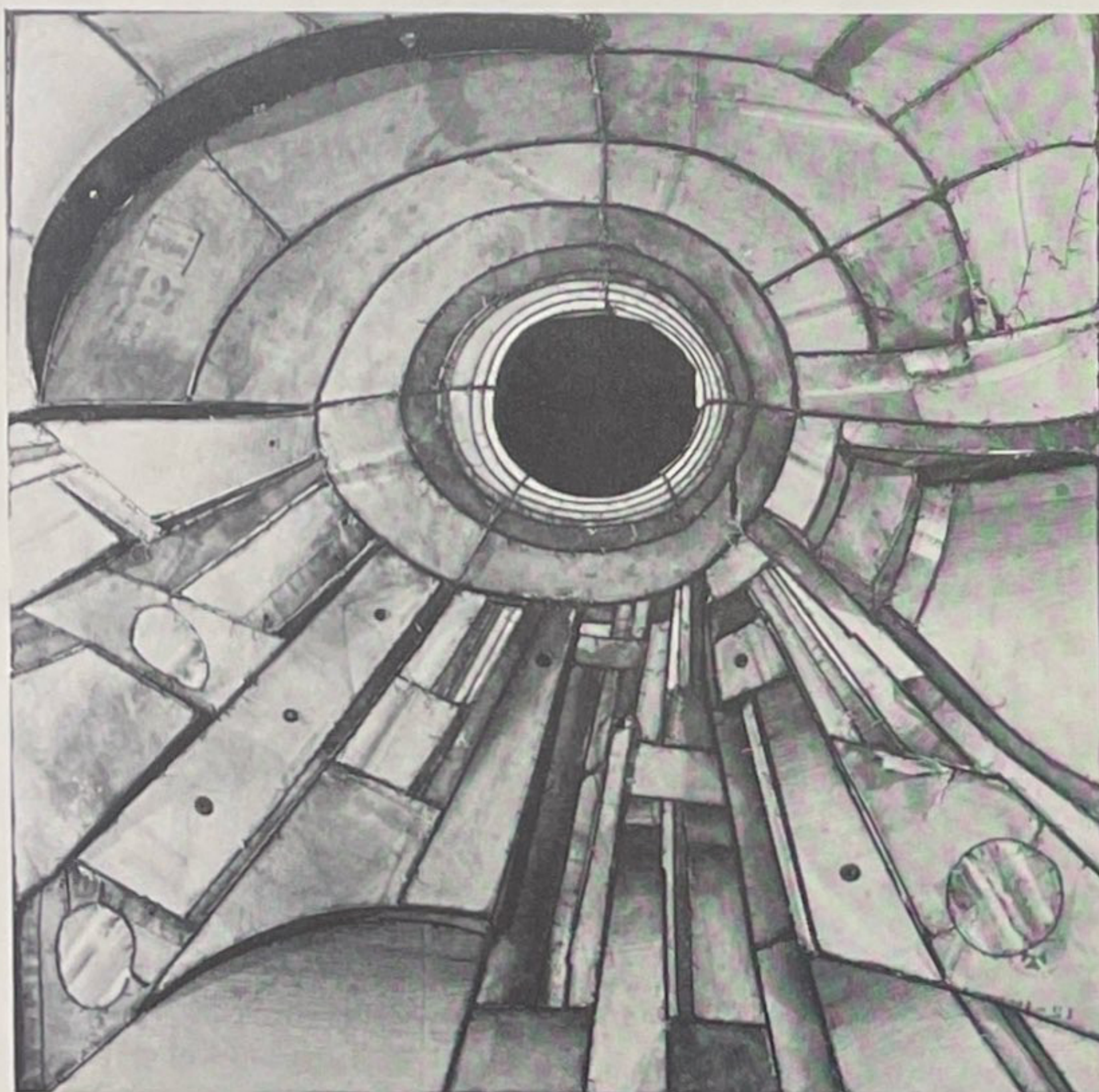
greatly to your knowledge as an artist!

There's no need to invest in many supplies for your experiments: your cellar, garage or kitchen will yield unusual and effective tools and materials and you may turn up some exceptional surfaces too, some of which we show you on the next pages. You'll see throughout the section how different artists have handled various mediums and at the end you'll find pages of practical information that will guide you now and be a helpful reference later whenever you're uncertain about medium techniques. You won't know, of course, until you experiment and explore yourself, which ones give you the most pleasure, which work best for you. You're going to do things you've never tried before, so don't be timid, be adventurous and open-minded—always watch for the exciting element of chance, for the surprises that add challenge and give extra zest while you work.

Photograph of artist Howard Jones in his studio surrounded by luminal art
Courtesy Royal Marks Gallery, New York



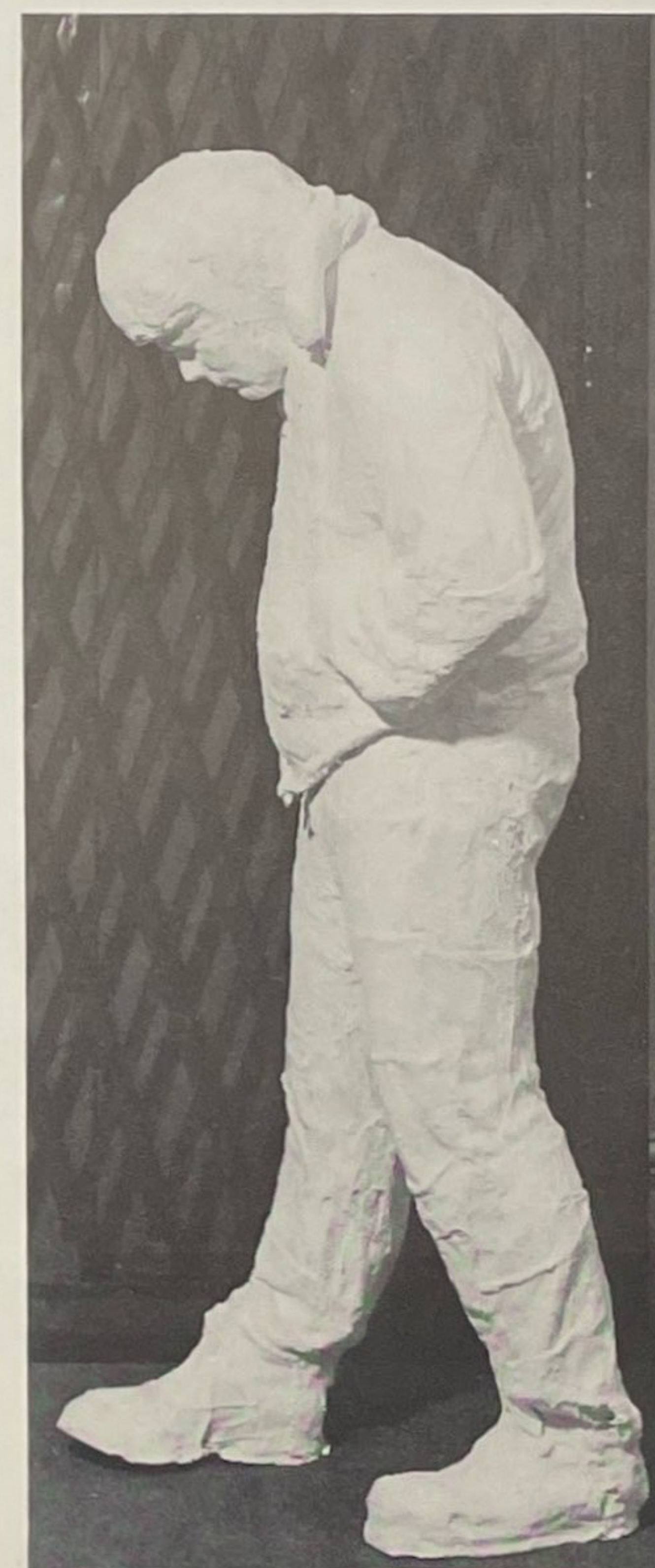
Untitled, 1960 (shaped canvas stretched over welded rods, wire), Lee Bontecou
Courtesy the Art Institute of Chicago
Gift of the Society for Contemporary American Art



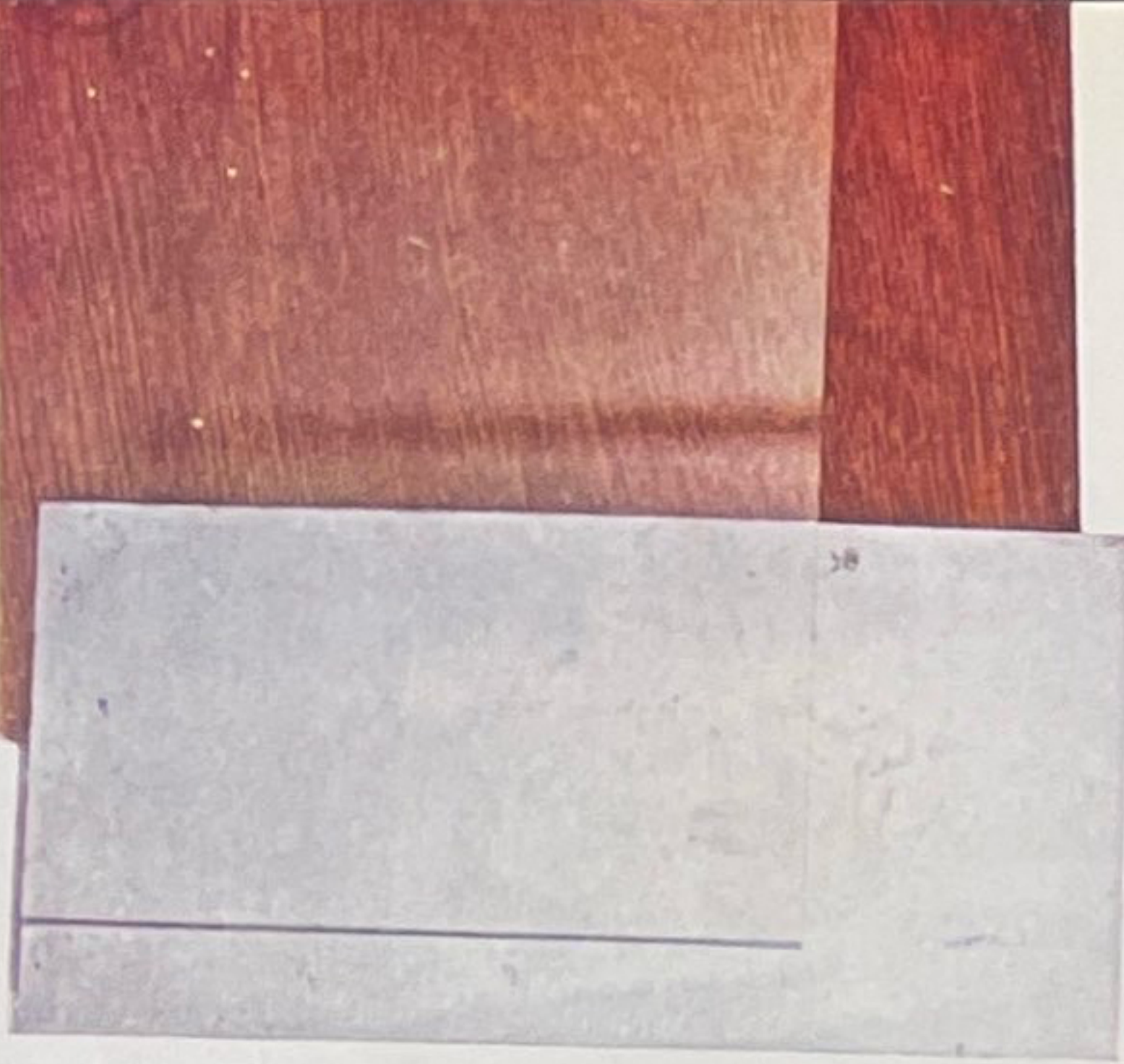
Gray Horizontal (oil on canvas), Will Barnett
Photograph courtesy Waddell Gallery, New York



No. 2, 1949, detail (oil, Duco and aluminum paint dripped on canvas), Jackson Pollock
Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York

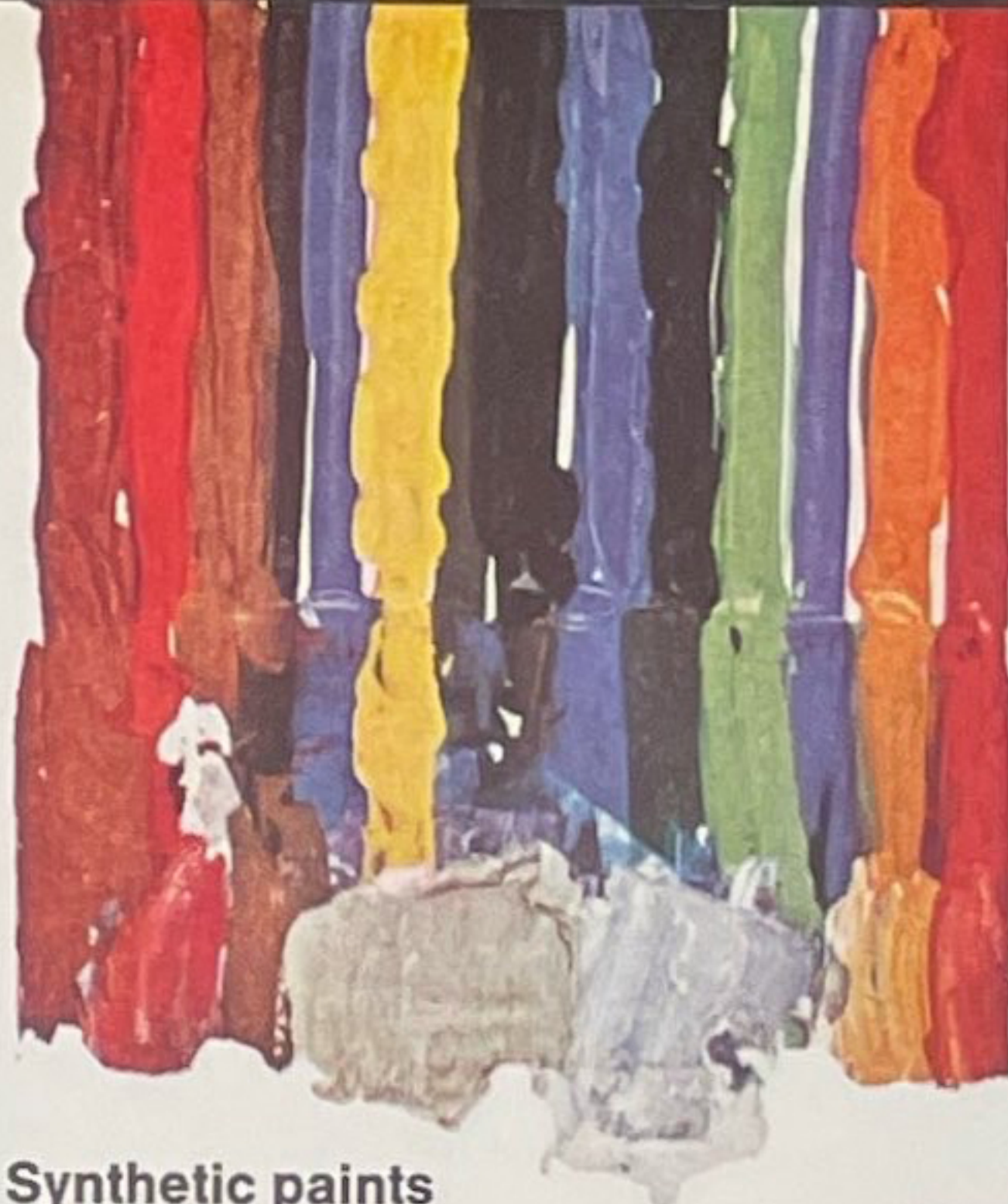
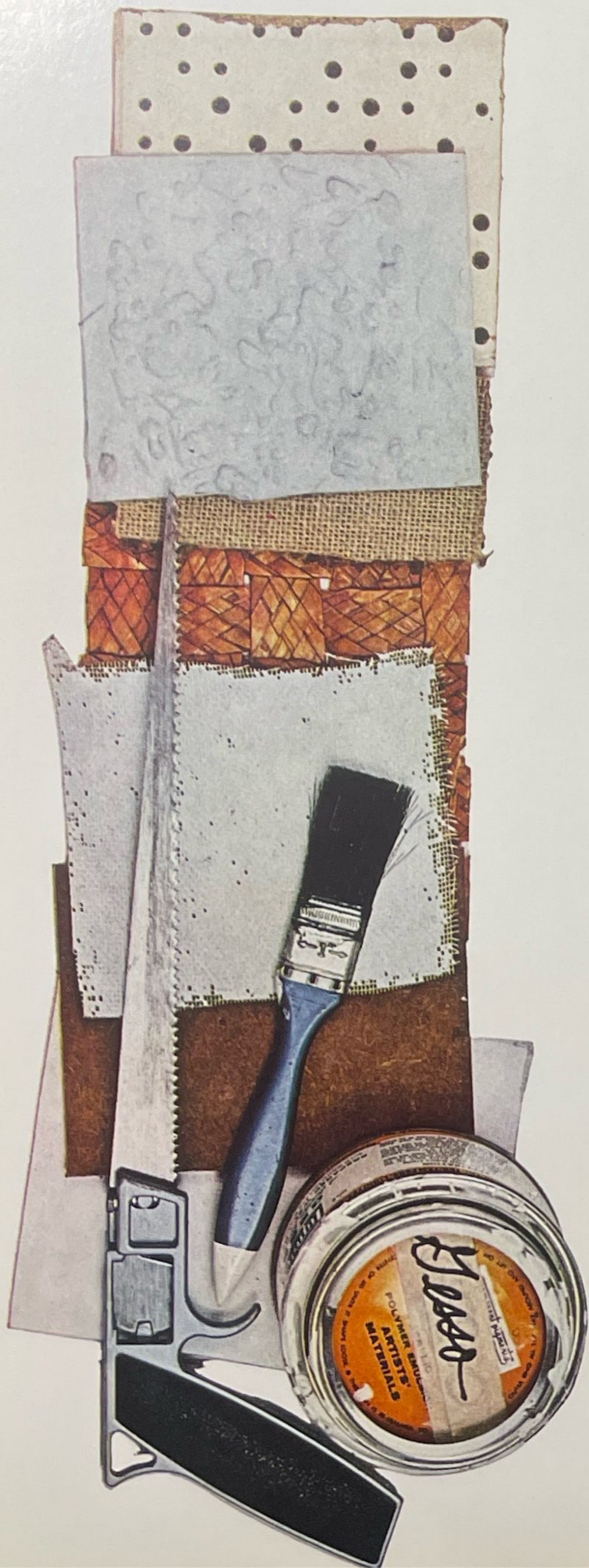


Walking Man (Portrait of Larry Poons)
(plaster-soaked rag strips
molded around live figure), George Segal
Courtesy Sidney Janis Gallery, New York



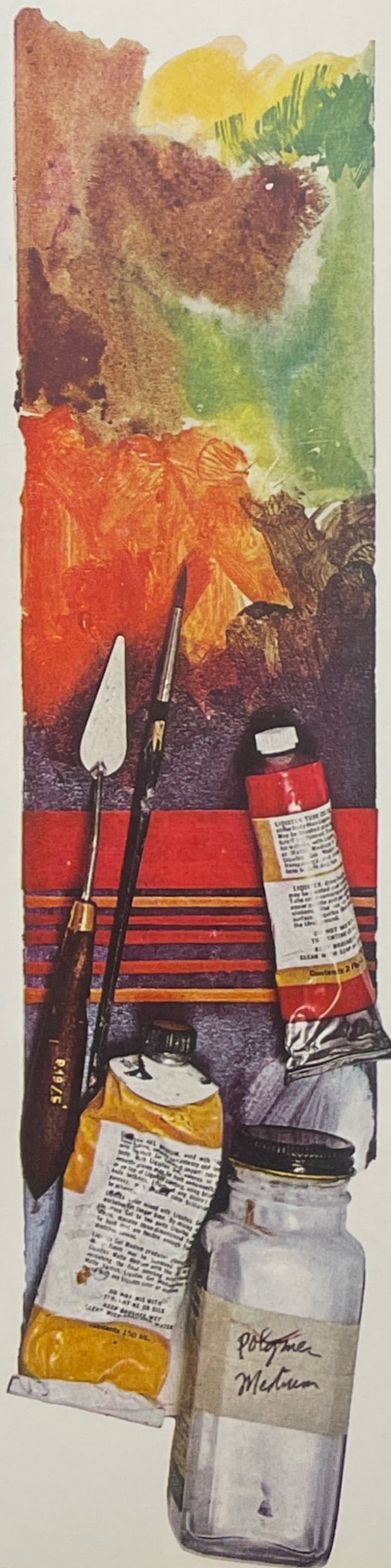
Painting surfaces

Consider first of all in your exploration of materials the many surfaces available: masonite, wood, metal, glass — even the back of an old carpet can be painted on. You'll want to apply gesso to most of these surfaces to create a base coat with "tooth" for the paint to cling to. Look for surface textures that are unusual and sympathetic to your subject. Glass or plastic gives a transparent effect. Try sprinkling a little sand, sawdust or fine gravel into wet gesso — excellent for a subject needing a rough feel.



Synthetic paints

Polymer paints (also called acrylics or vinyls) are the most versatile medium available! These relatively new plastic paints can be mixed with water, yet they're waterproof when dry; they have a smooth consistency and combine the advantages of both watercolors and oils. Look below: synthetic paints may be applied like watercolor washes, can be built up to a thick impasto, can be used with a glazing medium and in combination with other mediums, too. They dry very quickly, are permanent and cover almost any surface.



Drawing tools

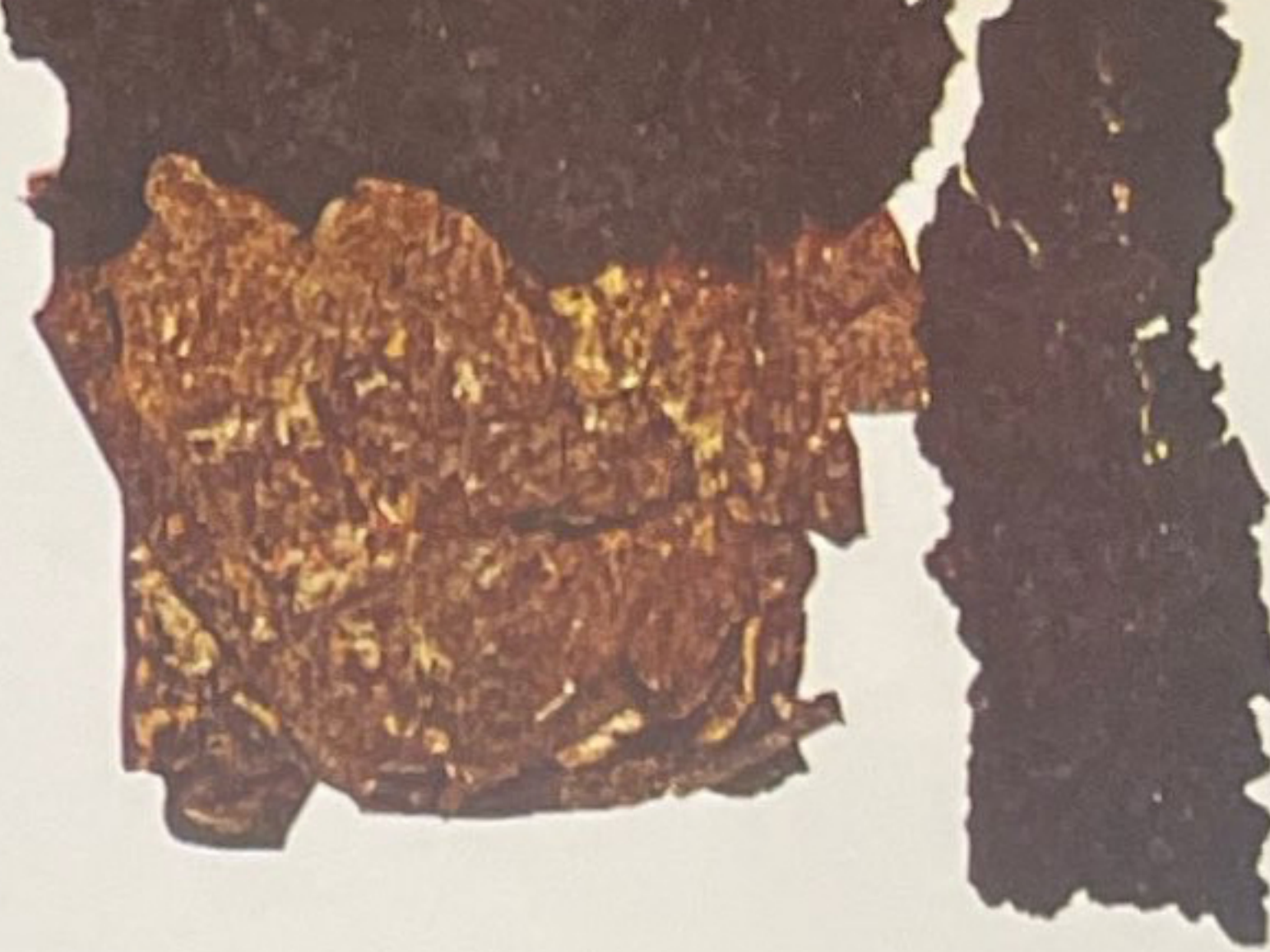
Most of these are old friends: pastels, colored markers, crayons, charcoal pencils. You've used them for years but probably not to their fullest. For instance, an unusual rainbow blending of colors results when colored markers are used on tracing paper and then sprayed with a fixative — the same spray that keeps pastels from smearing. Have you ever tried oil pastels? (These oil sticks are available at most art stores.) Crayons — the most familiar drawing tools of all — when heated and melted, make colorful *encaustic* paints.





Household products

Several years ago a few bold painters got quite excited about the colors and glistening effects of Duco automobile enamels and adopted this durable medium in their work. Today, you'll find a sizable array of quick-drying household paints (and household tools) that work well for artists. See what you can do with leftover water-based paint, a roller and a broad surface. Or try dripping household enamel or lacquer in the Jackson Pollock manner (see illustration on page 3). Don't overlook spray paint or neglect plaster of Paris for deep-textured relief paintings!



Assemblage

You need a sharp eye for color and shape and a feeling for texture when you gather things that have assemblage potential. (You've already learned the basic facts about this kind of artistic expression.) An assemblage often begins with just a vague plan and a few small objects that strike your fancy; but, as you work, the materials themselves will suggest arrangements and will clue you to other objects that in the end create an interesting, unified piece. So begin with perhaps a few scraps of found art and the germ of an idea and see what happens.



Combinations

Paints, papers, colored markers and assemblage materials can all be combined in a number of ways, so don't confine yourself to any one category of materials. For example, if you were planning a piece based on the theme "time," you might use a clockface and gears and springs. Old newspaper clippings or appropriate magazine photographs could further convey an awareness of time and its passing. Colored markers, polymers or spray paint could add drama to this or any other theme you select.



Mediums and you

"Knowing yourself and understanding your reactions to your sense of hearing, tasting, seeing and touching can be very helpful to you as an artist," advises Guiding Faculty member Lorraine Fox. "Are you bold or timid, wild or quiet? Are you content, or do you have an insatiable curiosity that makes you constantly look for change? Do you have a tendency to line things up neatly or do you let them fall haphazardly? These are some of the keys to your innate talent . . ." And these are clues to the kinds of mediums, the techniques that will suit you best.

It's in the very nature of some painters to use materials that will give a thick, tactile, laid-on feeling. Others desire a smooth, glazed look, and there are those who prefer finely detailed work. Each will choose the materials that create these particular effects. Many artists have committed themselves to creative construction in wood, in metal, paper or plastic — again the medium is dictated in large part by individual temperament and the demands of the subject.

Look at the swatches below: the tacky quality, the buttery look of impasto; the drippy, accidental look which can be put to such excellent use in some work; the careful hatching which creates a subtle, built-up appearance in pen and ink; the textured, tactile effect of actual pieces of natural materials. What appeals to you the most?

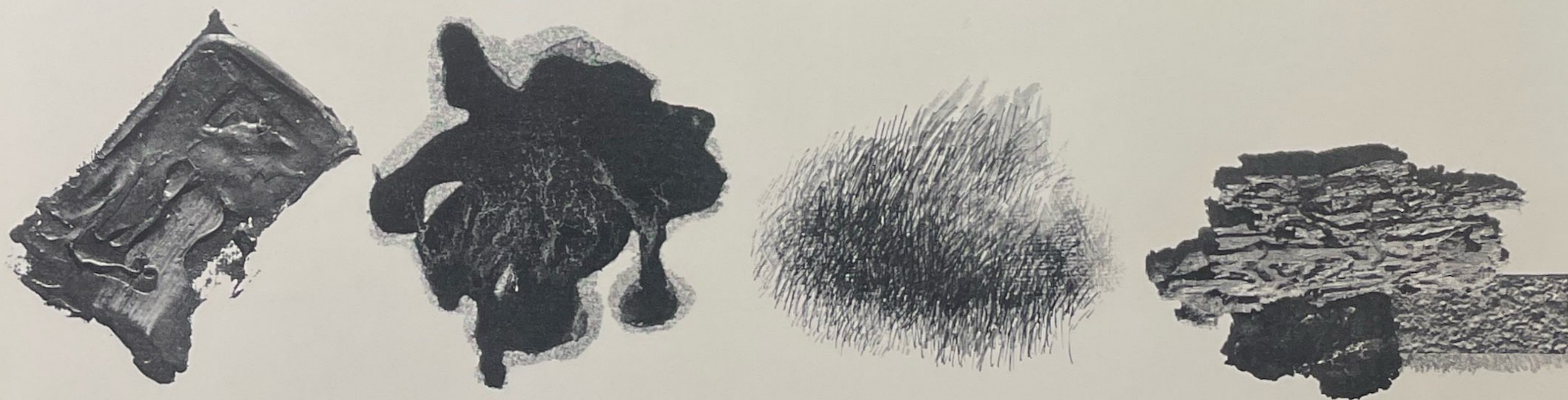
On the opposite page, four artists of varying temperaments show different reactions to the same scene in the mediums

that best suited their individual style. Were you to work on a similar picture, what effect would you want, what way of working would give you the most pleasure — what medium would do the job?

The paintings, collages, assemblages and constructions in this section show some of the many ways, the many mediums with which you can express yourself. The Studio Handbook at the end of the section will tell you exactly what materials were used by each artist — and how. Follow these procedures as you would a recipe. Later you can experiment with various combinations of mediums and may even develop some new ones of your own.

At any rate, you won't want to limit yourself, but will want to try several techniques that lend themselves to your special temperament. Robert Rauschenberg, one of the important artists of our era, has moved often from one style and material to another. He has run through a good many ways of working, but has always been glad to give up one method and medium for another. "When I reach a stage where working in a certain way is more apt to be successful than unsuccessful — and it's not just a lucky streak — when I definitely see that this is the case, I start something else."

When you achieve a certain satisfaction with one way of working, don't settle comfortably back, getting in a rut — heed Rauschenberg's words — move on to other mediums, keep really alive.



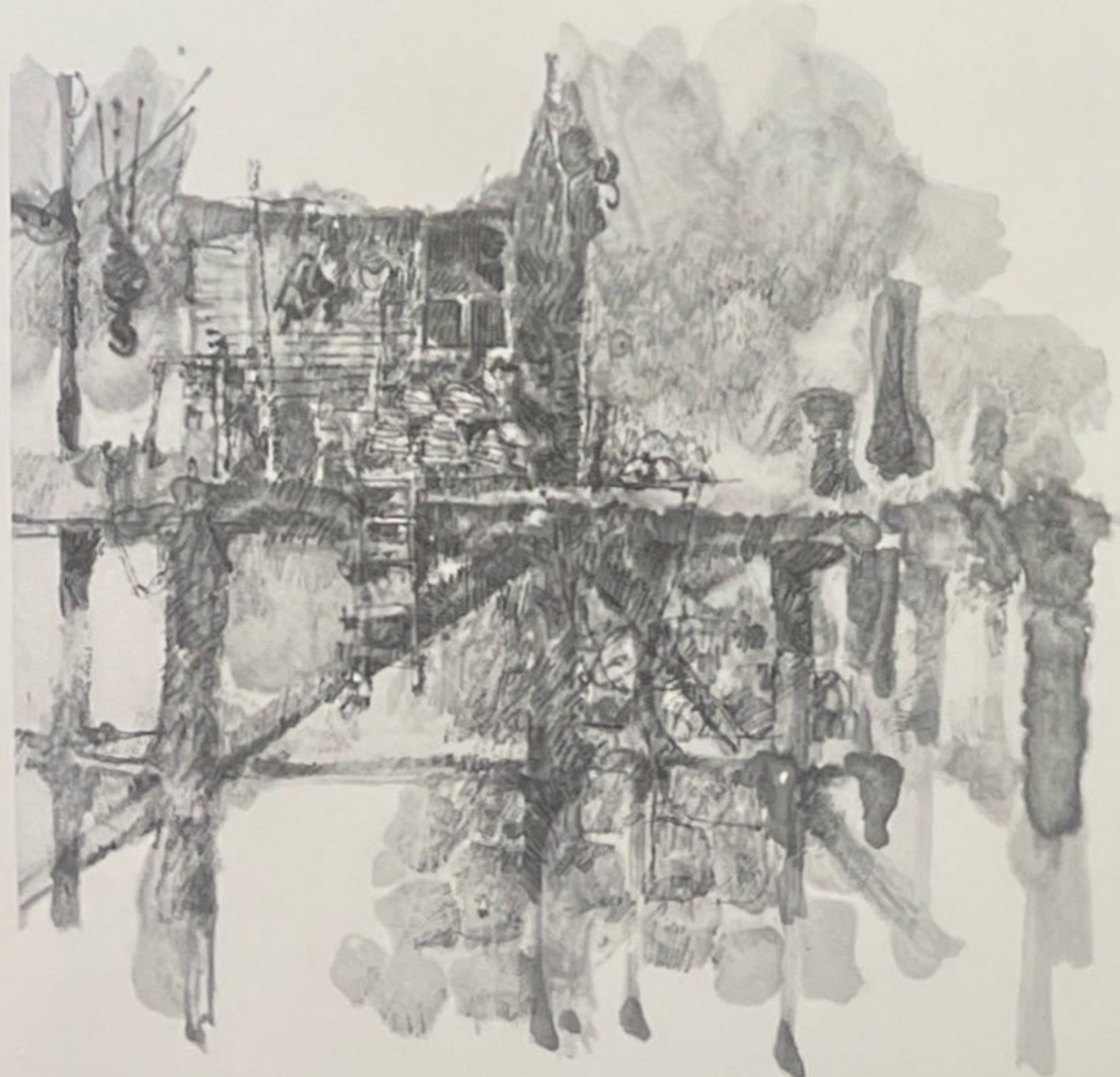
Remember this fisherman's wharf?

It's the same pattern we showed you in Section 15, where you saw what a tremendous difference variations in value and shape arrangement can make. How do you respond now to this scene when it has been re-created in various mediums? Don't the different techniques and materials used for each picture evoke a separate set of feelings — even though the subject itself has not changed?

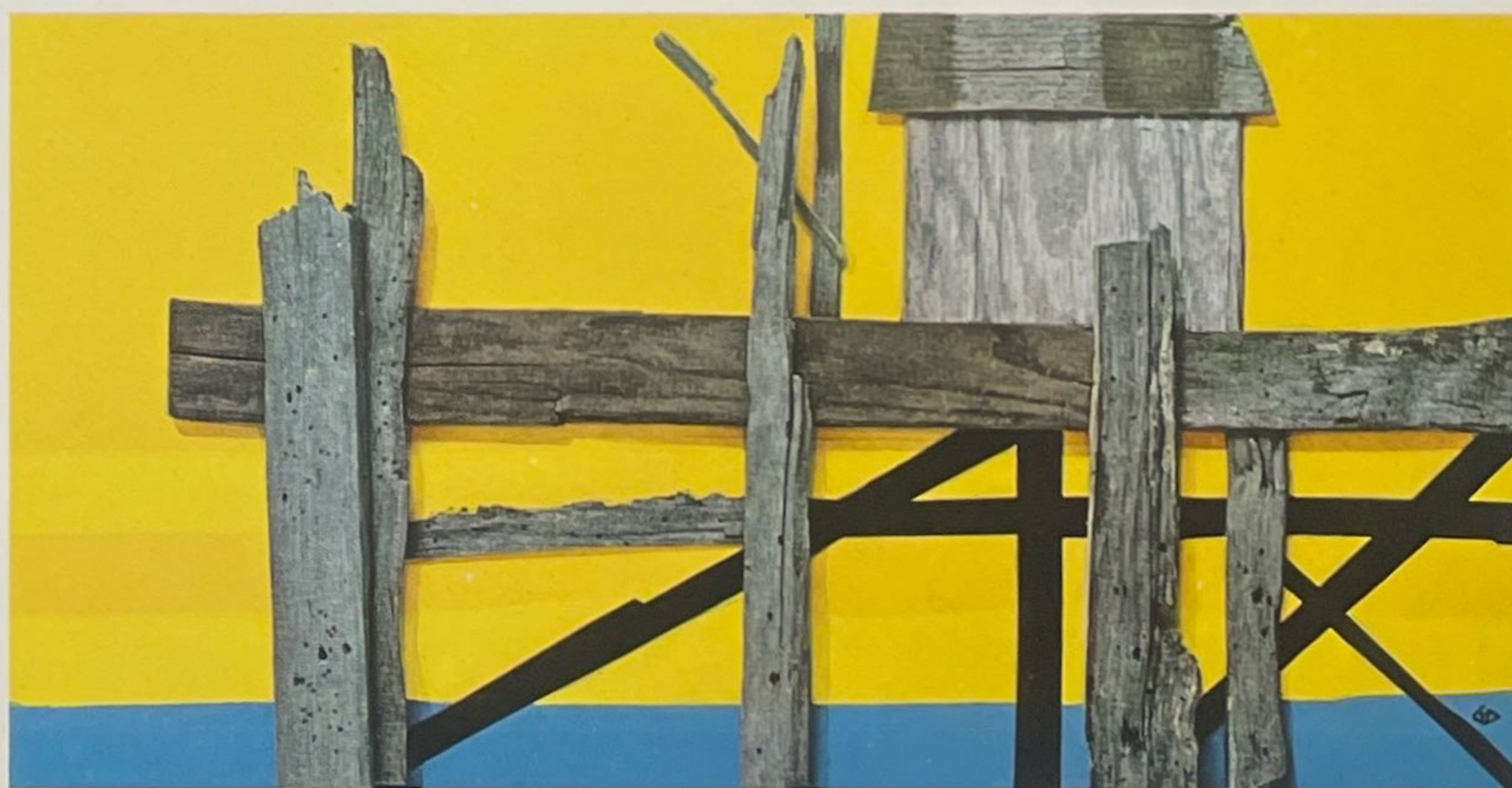
Brush and knife marks stand out in relief when oils are heavily applied.



Polymer on canvas, wetly and freely painted, by an adventurous artist.



The built-up look is achieved by meticulous pen-and-ink hatching, with ink washes, on rice paper.



Wood fragments and colored paper on cardboard create vivid, contrasting textures.



Honeymoon (polymer and oil on canvas), Joseph Hirsch



Vermont Memorial (polymer on masonite), Franklin Jones

Mediums for a controlled technique

Painting in a meticulous, controlled manner requires preliminary planning, careful draftsmanship and considerable patience! But many artists are attuned to finely detailed, painstaking work; they're concerned with the sharply focused effect created by building up layers of small sensitive brushstrokes.

Three excellent mediums for this kind of deliberate, careful work are oil, polymer paint and egg tempera. The paint is applied with precision, usually with a narrow brush, on a smooth, well-prepared ground. It's interesting to know that the artist who used polymer to paint the realistic rural scene above removed all but three hairs from a thin brush to indicate the texture of the grassy field and the weathered barn.

In the egg tempera painting of the clowns at the right, the artist used a light hatching of fine brushstrokes to model his forms. This medium has been used by artists for centuries and creates a most beautiful surface — there is no shine but the colors are clear and have a distinctive rich luminosity.

Guiding Faculty member Joseph Hirsch used a combination of polymer and oil in the painting on the opposite page; he first laid in broad areas with polymer, then over-painted and glazed with oil to achieve his soft, subtle color variations.



Fugue from the Life and Thought of Hoo Ha the Clown (egg tempera on masonite), Robert Levers



Figure (gesso, casein, compressed charcoal, conté crayon on masonite), Jak Kovatch



Untitled (black carbon, acrylic on paper), Tauno Kauppi

City Harbor (oil pastels, gouache on tracing paper), Austin Briggs



A freer use of mediums

Here the pace is much faster: the artists work with daring, without care for fine details but with special awareness of what's happening on their canvas as they paint. Moments of discovery occur when they decide to strike out and alter their working plans — often because of the unforeseen behavior of their medium or medium combinations.

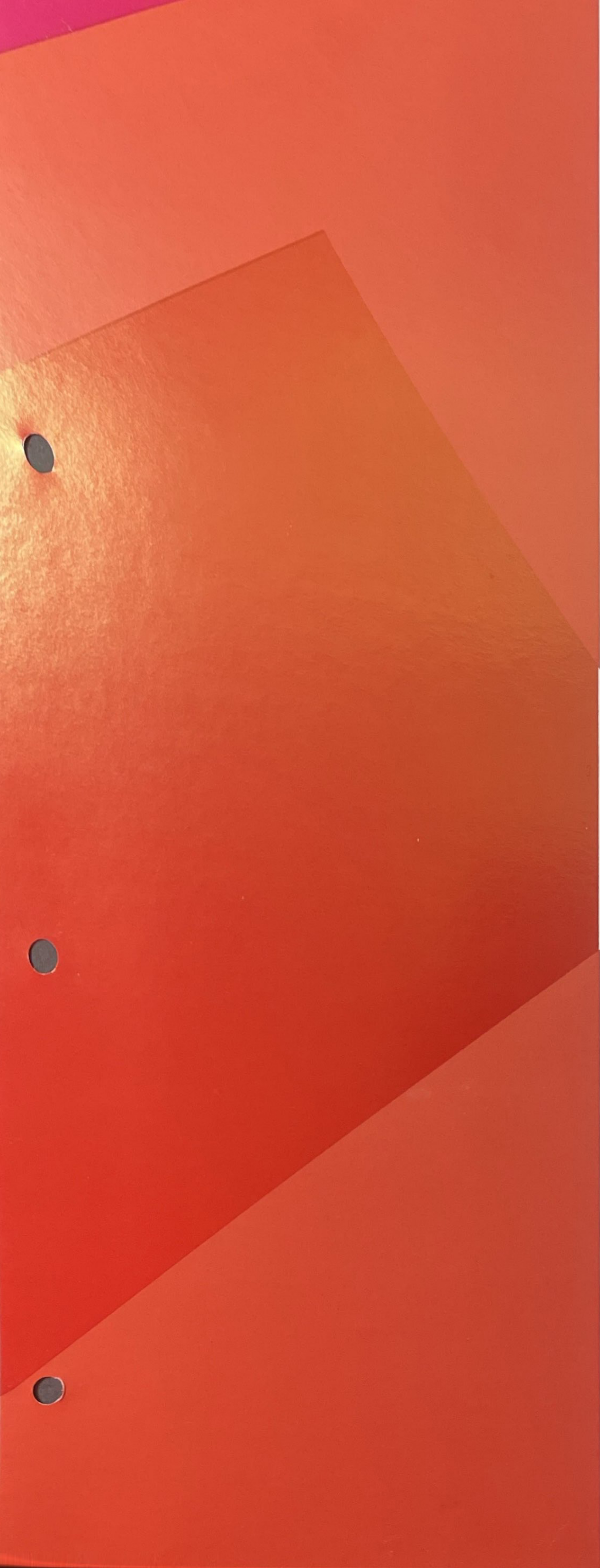
Working freely in a variety of mediums, each of these artists had a good general idea of what he wanted to achieve. But each one was especially alert for chance, for the accident that could give his painting the spontaneous quality he wanted. For instance, the artist who painted the picture at the far left

sometimes drew into areas of wet casein, sometimes drew where it was dry; since his control was intentionally limited, surprises often occurred which he could use. The eclipse-like effect in the next painting was achieved in part by random drops of water sprayed from a garden hose. Austin Briggs, in his city harbor scene, took advantage of the element of chance by applying his paint as freely as possible to create a lively interplay with the loosely drawn lines. Below, Syd Solomon made extensive use of surprise and "controlled accidents" when he worked rather briskly, using different tools, combining polymers and oils.



Run (polymer paint, oils on linen), Syd Solomon





The hard-edged style

Clean-edged shapes and flat colors — and their relationships — appeal to artists who enjoy precision, who allow no room at all for the surprise element in their work. The artist may invest more intellect than personal emotion in this kind of carefully planned painting, but the sharp linear edges of the shapes and the placement of colors have a real impact on the viewer. Though hard-edge paintings are painted flat, they can convey a feeling of depth and space and can create the throbbing, pulsating effect of Op art.

Polymer paint is often used for this approach to painting; spray paint is especially effective, too, to get the desirable flat finish, devoid of brush marks. (Masking tape is used to assure sharp, clean edges.) You can experiment with this kind of art, working with colored paper or bright-hued plastic tape. This simple form of abstract art can have great power, whether the medium be paint, paper or tape!



Waiting (melted crayon on pebble board), Bert Dodson

Mediums for a built-up effect

The excitement of tactile qualities, the character of some materials which make the fingertips tingle (causing you to want to actually touch an artist's work) is often conveyed by a heavily textured built-up effect.

Here we show you pictures by three artists working with different mediums—with crayon, with oil and with plaster of Paris. They have in common a liking and interest for this built-up feeling in their work. The encaustic painting at the left was created by overlapping layer upon layer of heated and melted crayons. In the oil painting below, the impasto effect began with several coats of underpainting in many colors which were ultimately covered, for the most part, with thick white oil paint laid on with a palette knife.

On the opposite page, the contrasting imprints of tractor treads and horseshoes were cast in plaster of Paris directly from the firmly packed earth—making a strong statement that could not be expressed with quite the same meaning in a flatter, smoother manner



White Painting (oils on canvas), George Morrison



Tracks (plaster of Paris), Gillian Jagger

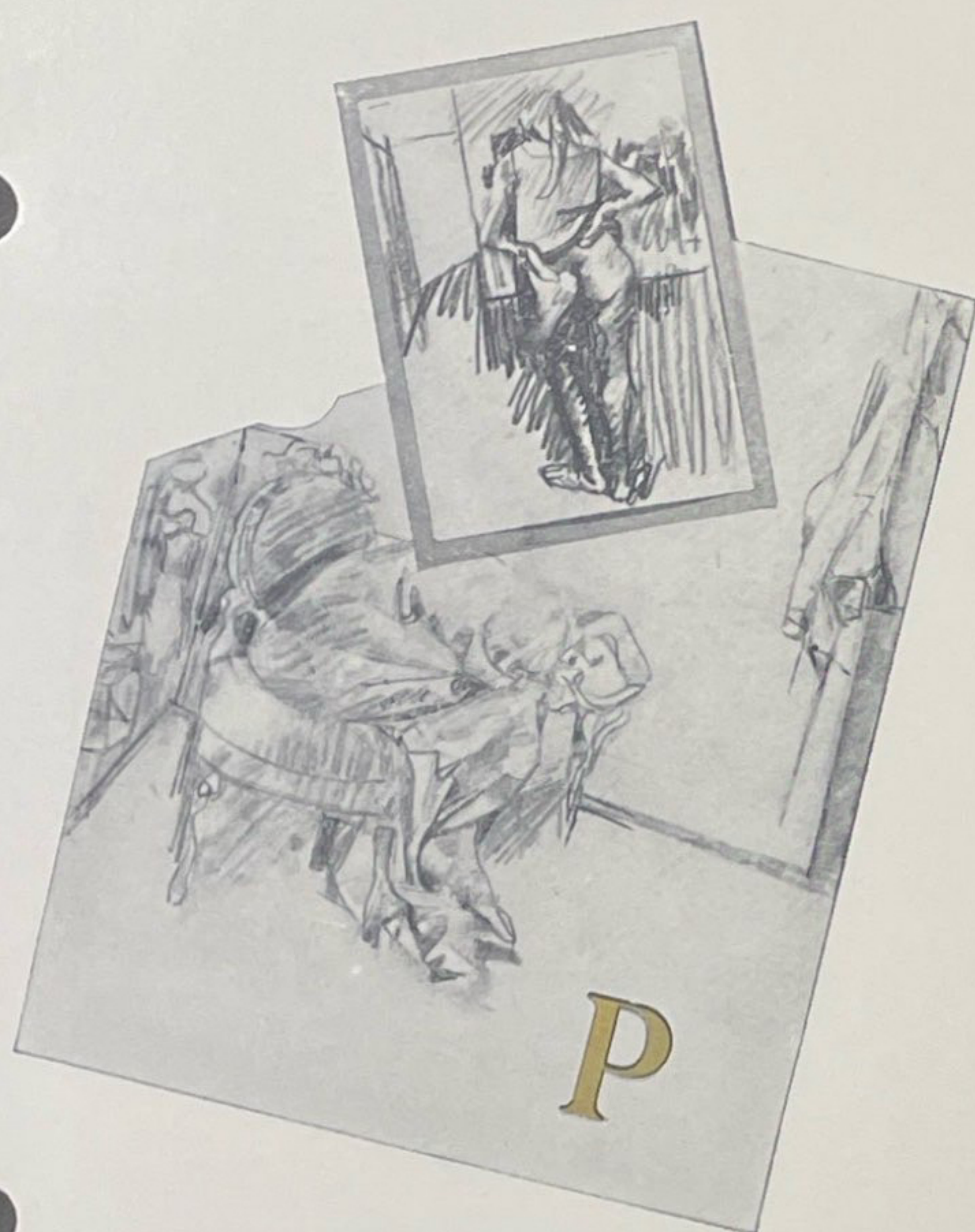


Where Were You On August 25, 1914?, Bob Peak

Collage

The spirit of a bygone era was captured by Guiding Faculty member Bob Peak in the collage above. Composed of photographic memorabilia, scraps of lace and a wash of colors popular at the time, this collage evokes a nostalgic feeling, a poignant mood that would have less impact had the artist worked in another medium. Look at the overlapping old photographs that comprise much of the clothing, the skirt, the necktie, even the big flower on the once very fashionable broad-brimmed hat. This kind of direct use of materials offers a special freedom and flexibility. Peak had no preliminary plan; he worked spontaneously. When an arrangement didn't quite please him, he glued another picture on top, or overlapped it until he got just the effect he wanted.



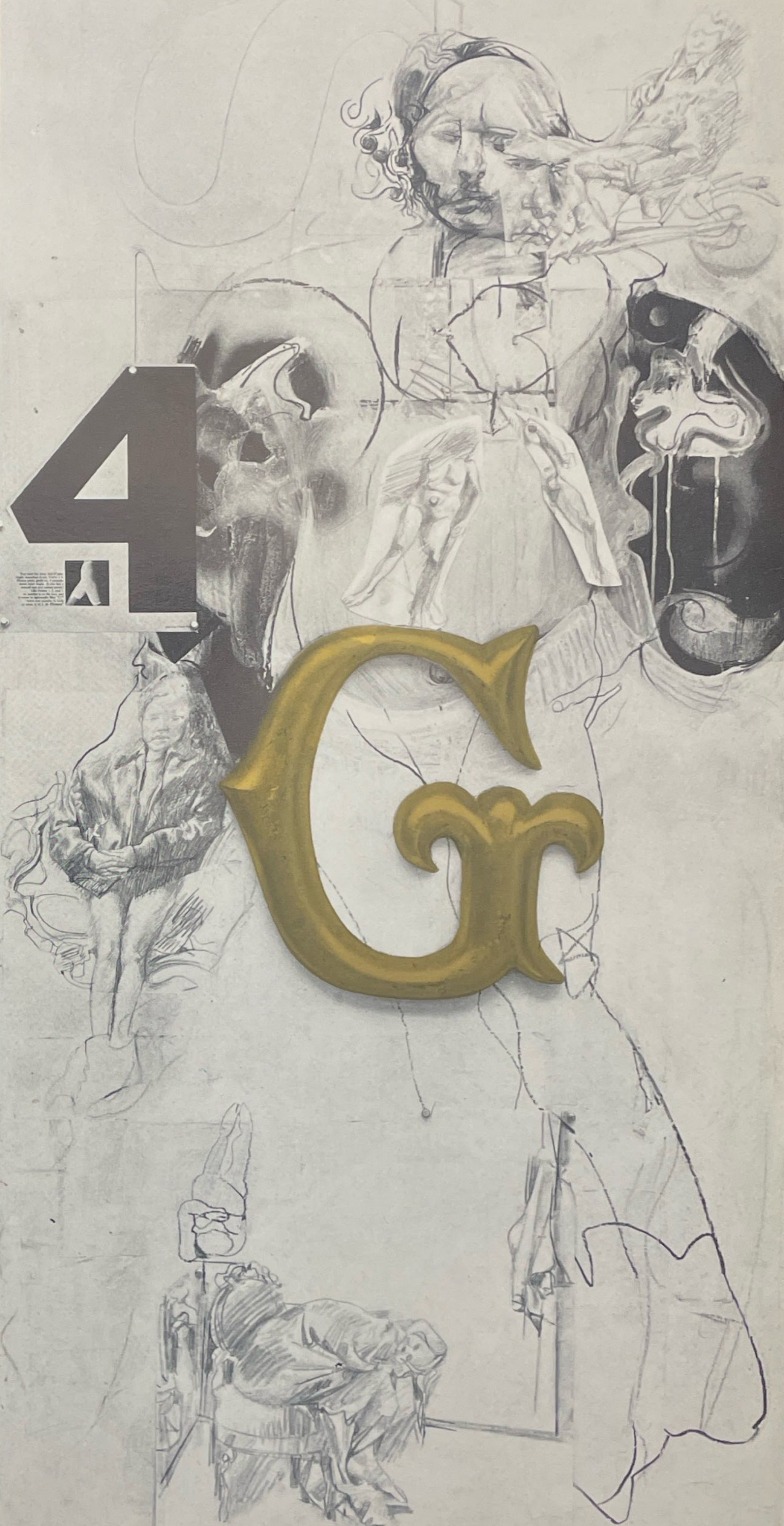


The contemporary collage at the right has an intriguing air about it which has been developed slowly, deliberately. The artist, Michael Mitchell, glued tracing paper, a section of a magazine ad, some of his own freely sketched charcoal and pencil drawings, and gold-leaf letters to what was once an unpainted door. Long consideration was given to each piece before it was affixed; the artist let days, even weeks, pass until he was sure he liked it well enough to make it permanent. As with all collage, the placement of materials is of foremost importance.

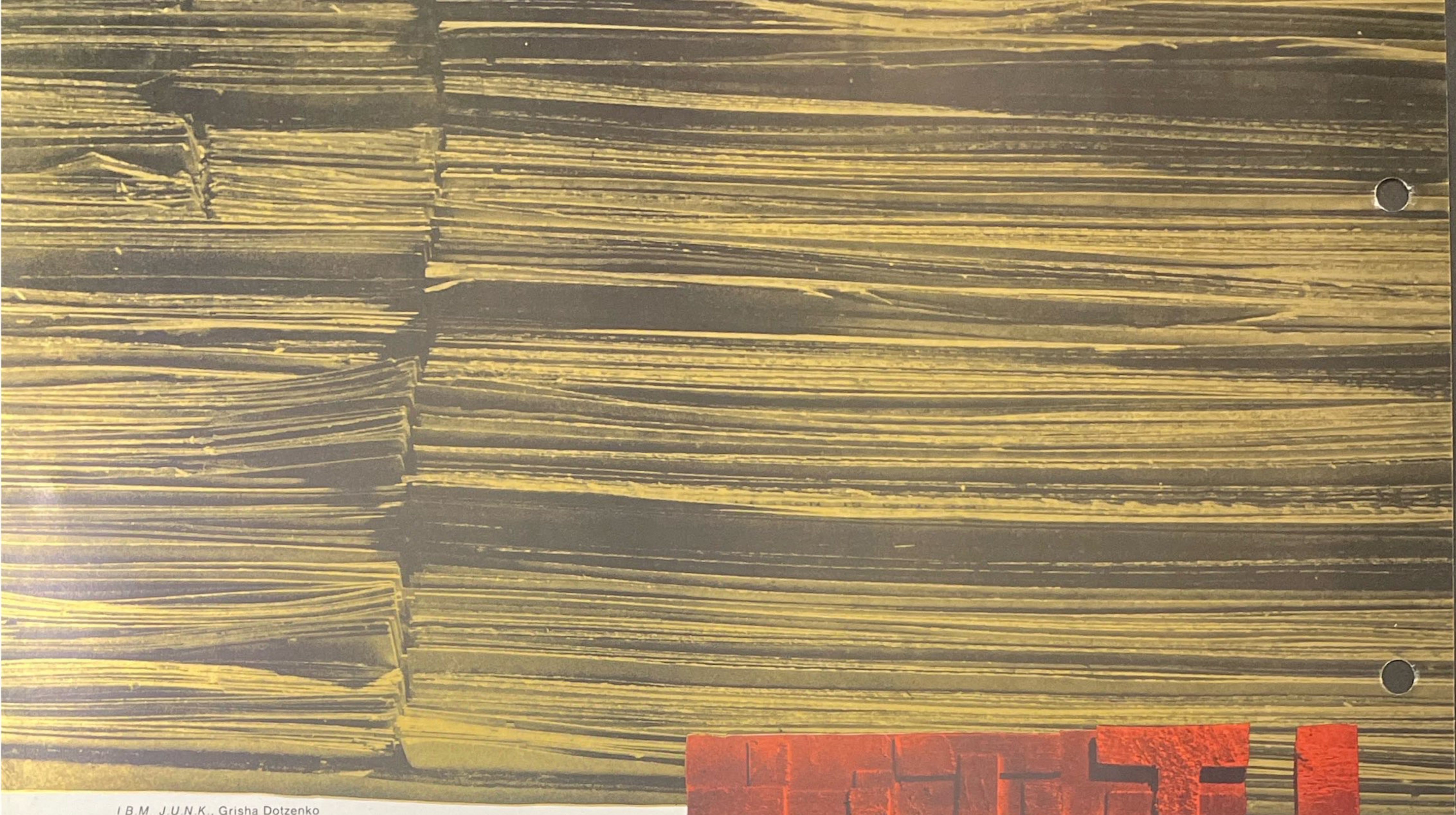
Gap, Michael Mitchell

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IBM J.U.N.K., Grisha Dotzenko

Relief construction

What could be more lifeless and artistically uninteresting than a handful of IBM cards? The artist who made the relief construction above saw them strewn about, felt they looked faintly golden and wondered how he could use them. A collage? he asked himself. No. He wondered what would happen if they were placed in an upright position. Nothing! He squeezed his mind a bit further and here's the result. He stacked and cut the cards in different heights, bending the edges of some for added interest, then glued them in a block to a cardboard. Because they didn't look sharp edged and metallic enough to suit him, he sprayed them with gold paint. You may find you're interested in surface movement like this, in a dynamic texture with a forward-and-outward feel. The red-painted wood relief construction is also composed of but one material and almost similar shapes which have been arranged into a harmonious, meaningful piece. The objects themselves — the file cards and the wood shapes — were not inspirational until the artist's imagination was involved.

Whenever some object catches your artistic interest, explore every possibility that comes to mind, until you hit upon some idea that sets you in action.



Red Times Five, Grisha Dotzenko



Americana, Tauno Kauppi

Assemblage

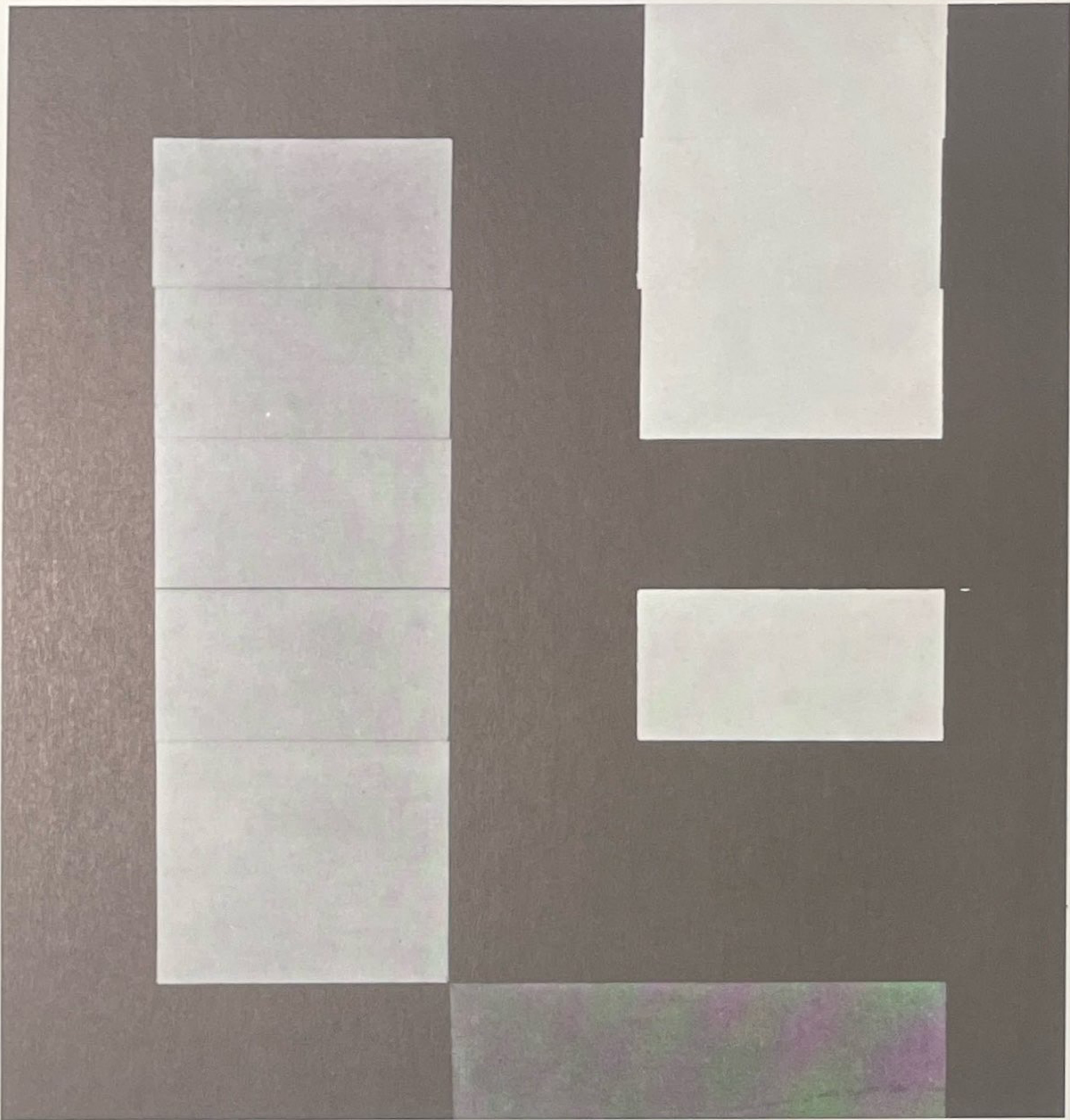
The unfolding of an idea is often given direction by the materials themselves — by their shape, size, color and texture. This is part of the creative process. The assemblage of flattened and rusted tin cans (*above*) was begun before the artist knew what the final three-dimensional arrangement of overlapping round and rectangular shapes was to be. As he explored the possibilities, the shapes themselves helped dictate their placement! It goes almost without saying that an as-

semblage of such relatively heavy material requires an epoxy glue and a strong support like the masonite panel here.

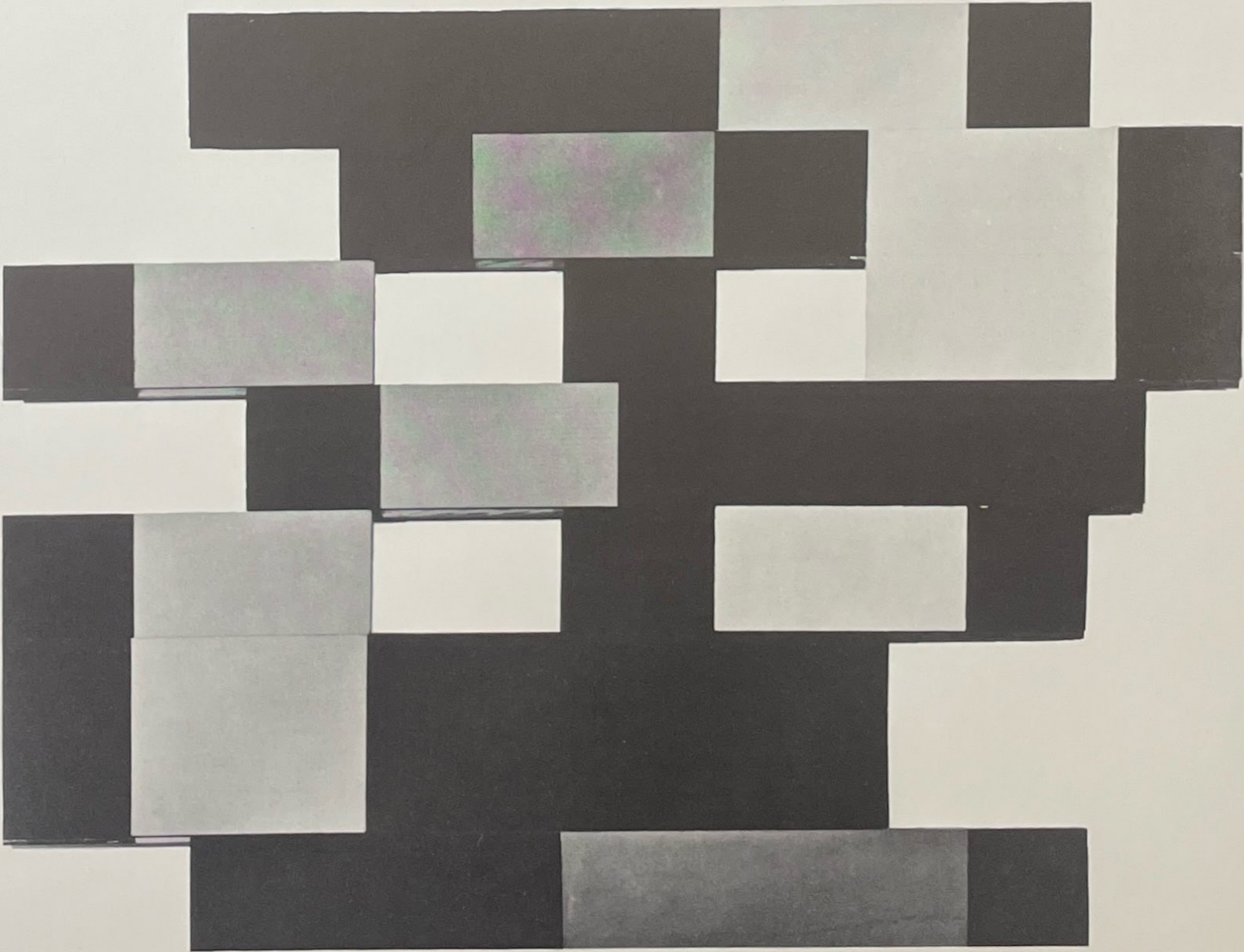
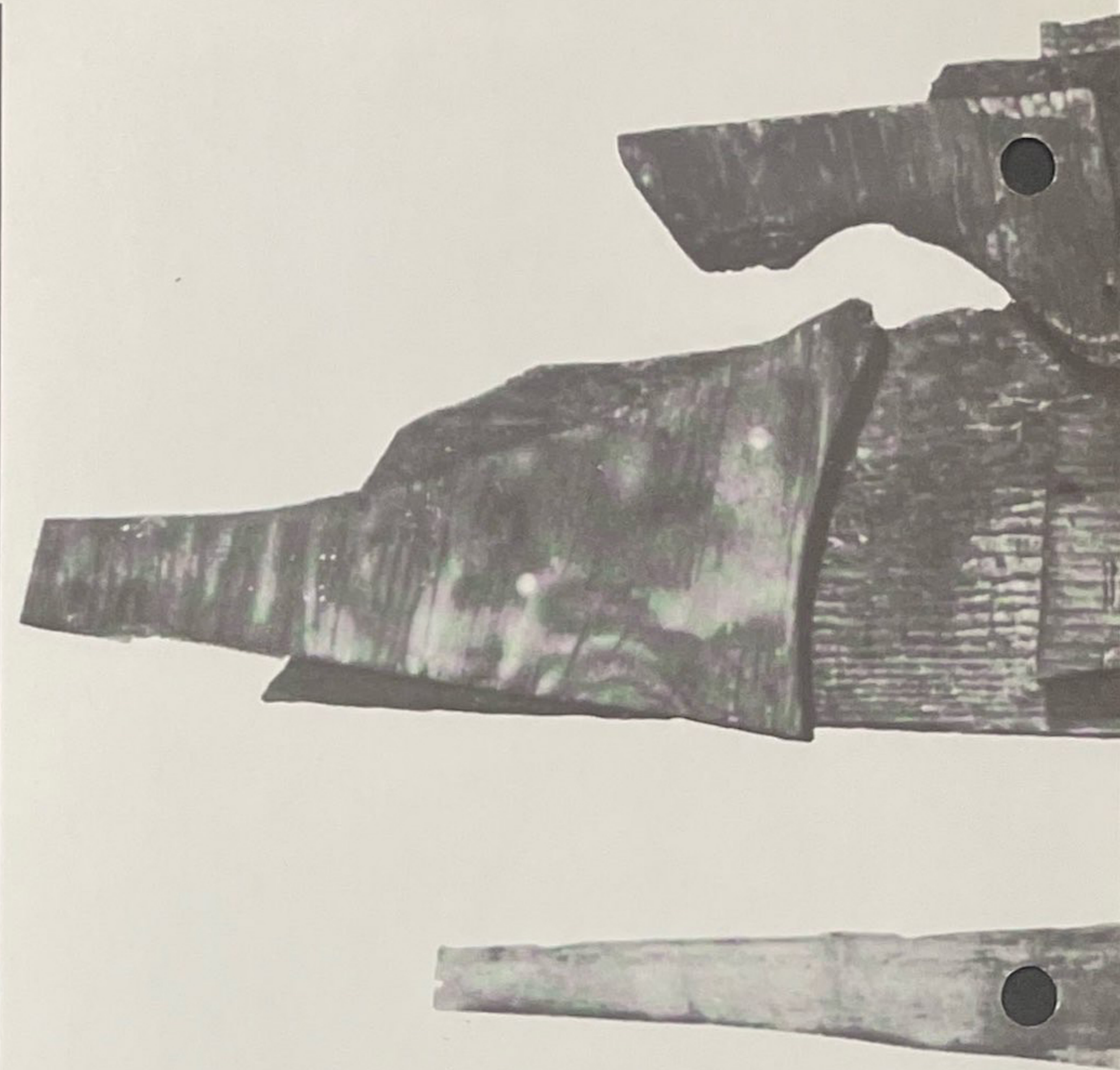
Below, file handles and drawer knobs were arranged in groups and set in a wood panel which had been mounted on similar handles. This assemblage was sprayed black and was planned to be viewed from above, for, as the artist worked, he felt that it conveyed the feeling of mushrooms and other growth seen in deep woods.

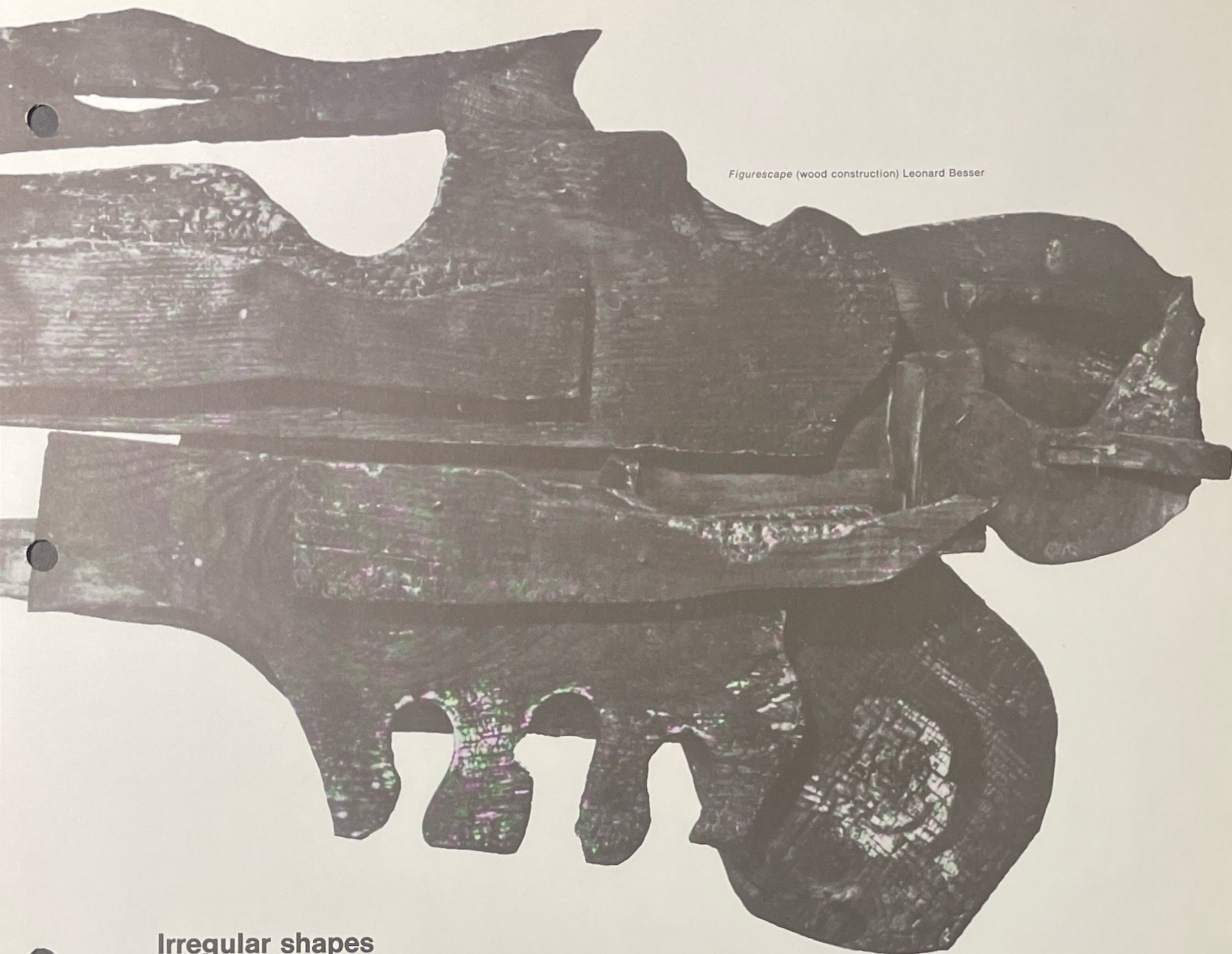


Forest Floor, Ed Reinhardt



Four Surprises (movable painting on sliding wood boards) Grisha Dotzenko





Figurescape (wood construction) Leonard Besser

Irregular shapes

Sometimes an artist feels the need to break away from working within the confines of traditional rectangular shapes! When he does, there are many directions he can take: the range of mediums and methods that lend themselves to freedom of form includes sand casting, shaped canvases, welded metals and other contemporary materials shown at the beginning of this section.

One artist—to break up the conventional rectangle—made a movable painting (shown on the opposite page) that assumes different shapes and patterns when you slide the tongue-in-groove boards on which the hard-edge design was painted.

The wooden figure above has a floating quality. The artist arranged, then rearranged, the odd and interesting-shaped pieces of slightly charred wood until the irregular curves and angles formed a harmonious, flowing composition.

Sand casting is another means of expression that allows freedom of form and shape. The fish at the right is a relatively small example of this method and medium; some relief sand castings are enormous, mural-sized pieces.



Piranha (sand casting) Grisha Dotzenko

More about assemblage

Artist Paul Camacho created the assemblages on this page from objects that he found and liked in his New England surroundings. They all show his special feeling for this area and for times past. The artist claims, though, that were he to live in industrial Pittsburgh or any other kind of a community, he would undoubtedly see, like and use objects familiar to that place.

"I rescue thrown-away things and give them a new life span," Camacho says. He arranges each object in relation to another until the composition feels right. This artist pays no attention to a theme in his work, but focuses entirely on placement, on what pleases the eye rather than on what tells a tale. It is only afterward, as he sits and looks awhile at a completed assemblage, that a story seems to develop. The objects are no longer discards but have new meaning — not only for the artist but for any viewer.



Studio Handbook – a few technical hints

On this and the following pages you will find descriptions and diagrams of some of the materials, techniques and working methods used by the artists whose work you have just seen. This information will help you in the specific problems of doing your own work and will encourage you to experiment with mediums and methods. The procedure for each example shown is presented in easy-to-follow steps, but remember that the individual artists put much thought and effort into their work, and sometimes had to find the answers to unforeseen problems just as you may.

Painting supports and grounds

Your choice of a *support*, or surface, for a painting is determined by a number of factors, the most important of which is the medium you are going to use. The appropriate support for a watercolor (usually paper or illustration board) might not be suitable for an oil painting.

There are many materials that will support various kinds of paint. These include wood, metal, glass, styrofoam, fiberglass, etc. The most commonly used supports for painting, however, are canvas (either cotton or linen) and panels of masonite or plywood:

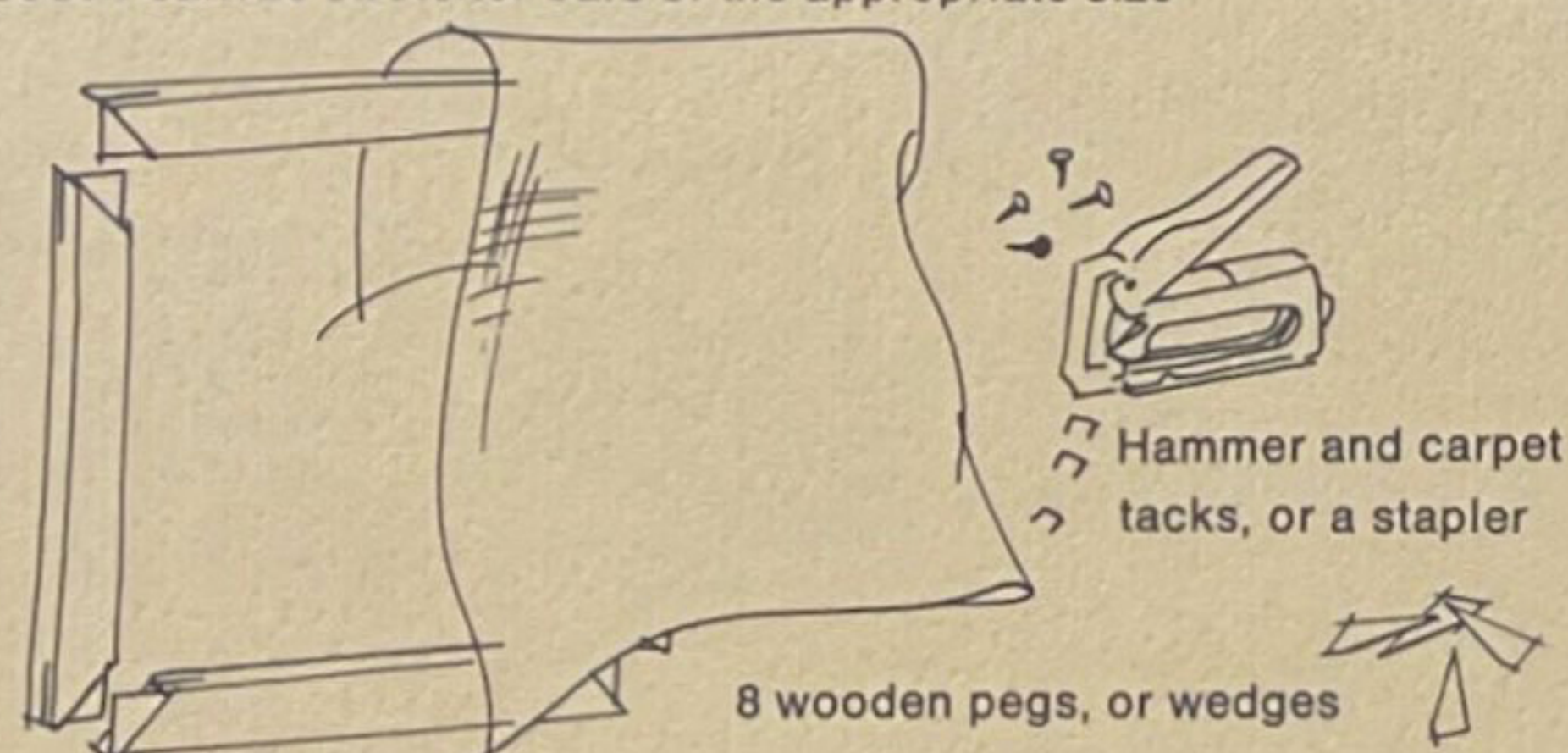
The supporting surface for oil and tempera painting is usually coated with a white *ground*. The white provides a clean surface for the preparatory drawing and gives brilliance to the colors when the paint is applied. One of the best and most convenient painting grounds is polymer gesso. It can be purchased ready-prepared in jars or cans. For a marble-smooth surface, paint it on in several coats and sandpaper it after it dries; for a rough surface, stipple it on with a large brush. You can even mix some sand in if you want a really coarse surface texture.

Stretching a canvas

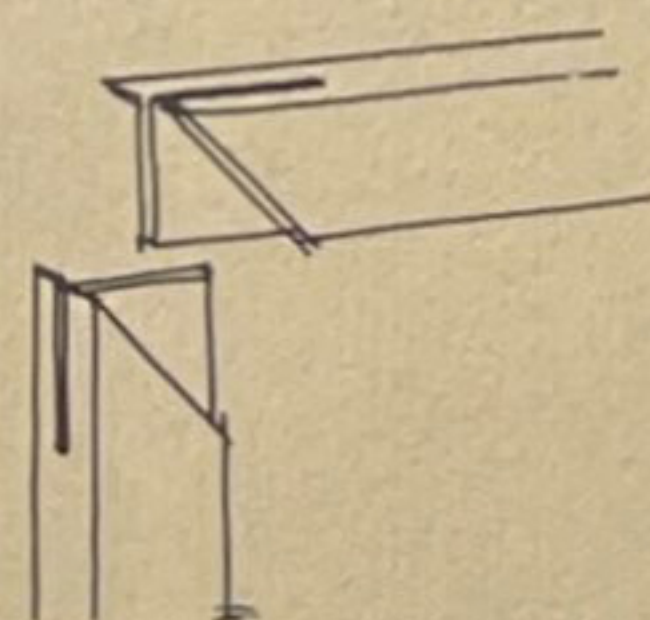
To stretch a canvas you will need:

A piece of cotton or linen canvas a little larger than the stretcher frame. You should be able to fold an inch or two of the material around the edges of the frame on all sides.

4 wooden canvas stretcher bars of the appropriate size



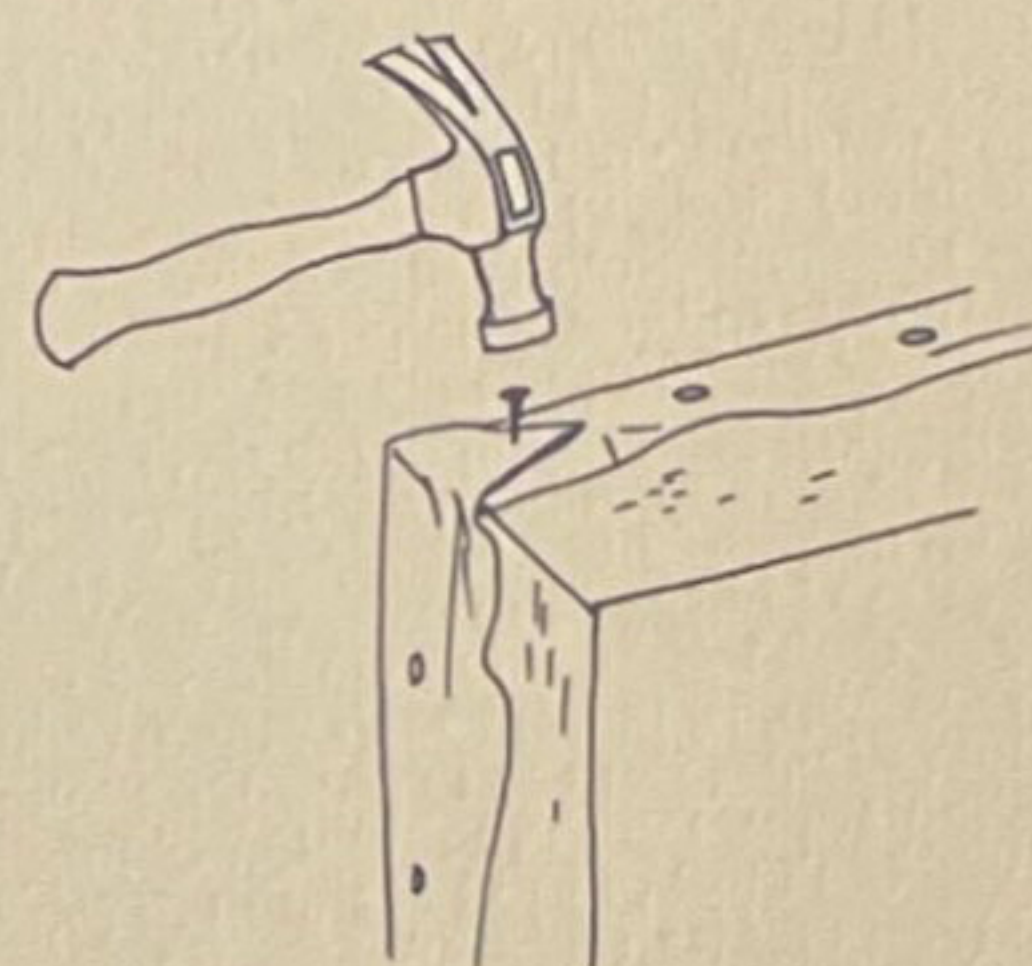
Join the four stretcher bars at the corners to form a rectangle. Make sure the corners are "square." If the bars are the type that you buy ready-made, the corners will fit snugly by means of an interlocking mortise.



Place the canvas over the stretcher bars with a margin of equal width overlapping all around. Beginning at the center of any side, fold the canvas around the bar and fasten it to

the edge with a single tack. Now, draw the canvas taut and do the same thing at the center point of the opposite bar. Repeat on the remaining two sides.

Once the canvas is held fast at these four points, continue to stretch and fasten, a few tacks at a time, working outward toward both ends of first one side, then the side opposite, until you reach the corners.

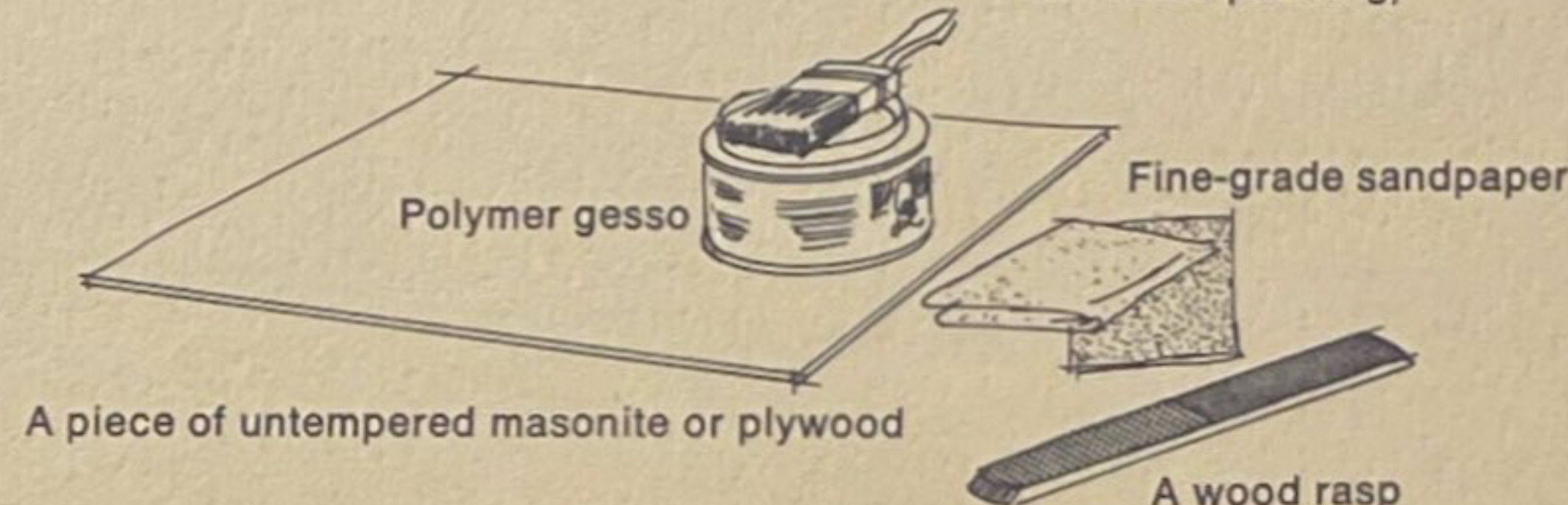


Make a neat fold of the excess canvas around each corner and tack flat to the stretcher. Now, working from the back of the canvas, insert the wooden pegs into the slots on the inside of each stretcher bar. Two pegs fit in each corner. Tap the pegs into the slots with your hammer. Their wedge shape will cause the stretcher frame to spread slightly at the corners, thus tightening the canvas. If your canvas already has a white ground it is now ready to paint on. If it does not have a ground, give it two or three coats of polymer gesso.

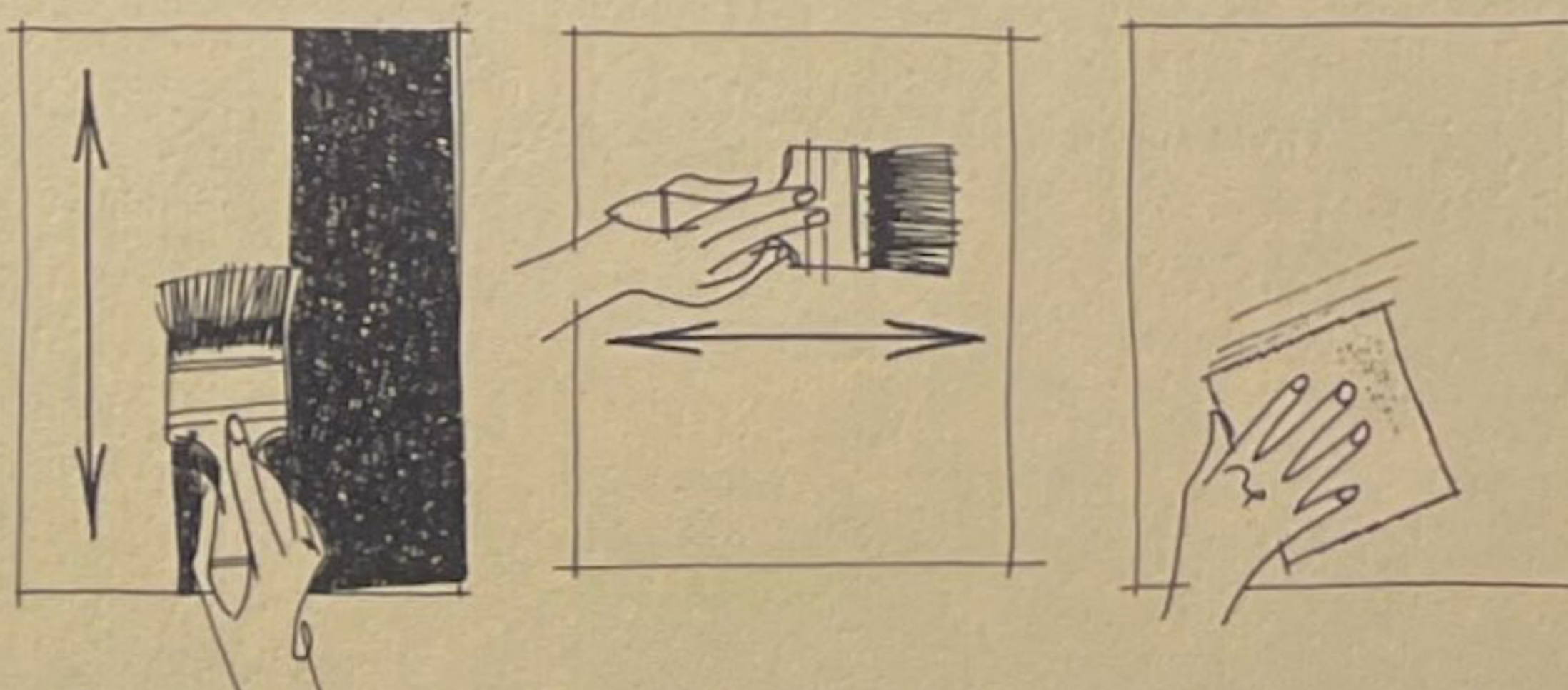
Preparing a gesso panel

To prepare a gesso panel you will need:

A 2- or 3-inch paintbrush (the ordinary type used for house painting)



Bevel the edges and round the corners of the masonite panel with a fine wood rasp. This is to prevent the ground from chipping at these exposed places. Now you are ready to apply the gesso. If necessary, thin the liquid gesso with water. It should be about the consistency of thick cream. Put on enough coats to give your painting a good support—six or seven are not too many. Each coat is applied with brushstrokes that run across (at right angles to) the strokes of the preceding coat. Allow to dry, and lightly sandpaper.



The last coat can be brushed or stippled on for a rough, textural surface, or sandpapered to the smoothness of marble, depending on the painting surface desired.

Painting mediums

All painting mediums consist of two principal ingredients—dry colors in the form of powder, and the binder that makes them adhere to the painting surface. In the not-so-distant past, artists had to prepare their own paints, and some, from choice, still do so today. In essence, making paint consists of grinding powdered pigment, mixed with the appropriate binder, to the desired consistency.

	linseed oil	= oil paint
	gum arabic	= watercolor
Dry color +	egg yolk	= egg tempera
	synthetic resins	= polymer paints, etc.
	wax	= encaustic paints

Our technical notes on each of the paintings you've just seen in this section can only give you a sampling of the ways some of these paints can be handled, and we tell you about only a few of the possible medium combinations. Each artist made very personal use of his chosen mediums, just as you will as you continue to paint.

Egg tempera on gesso panel

Fugue from the Life and Thought of Hoo Ha the Clown, Robert Levers

Materials:

Palette—muffin tin or plastic ice-cube container
Watercolor brushes, including fine sable brushes
A fresh egg
Tempera colors
Water
Gesso panel

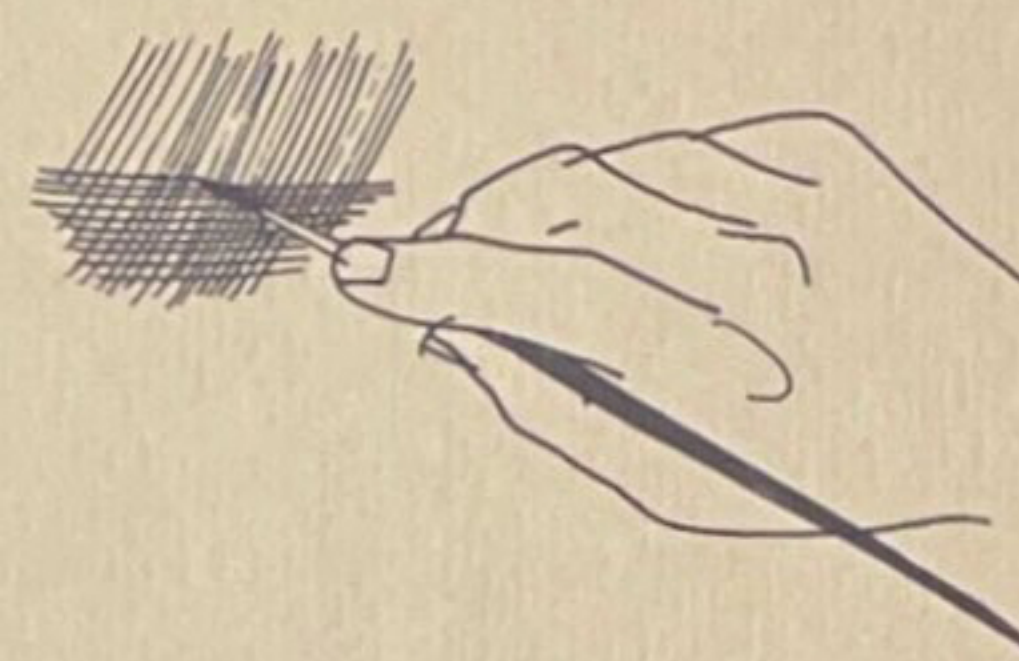
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Hudson, Jr.



This is a modern version of the time-honored technique that was used by nearly all painters in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

Before Levers begins to paint he transfers his preliminary line drawing to the gesso-covered panel. He separates the yolk of a fresh egg from the white and thoroughly mixes the yolk with an approximately equal amount of water to form his painting medium. There is no fixed rule for the proportion—just enough water to keep the egg from being too heavy and greasy. Two or three drops of vinegar added to this medium makes it easier to use, and acts, to a certain extent, as a preservative. The egg medium is kept in a jar with a cover, and if possible put in a refrigerator when not in use. Levers' paint consists of dry pigment that has been previously ground in distilled water and stored in jars, or designer's tempera colors, which are the same thing commercially prepared and sold by most art supply stores.

The desired colors are set out on the palette. Muffin tins or plastic ice-cube trays make good palettes for tempera. Enough of the egg-tempera medium is mixed with the color to make it the right consistency for brushing. The brush is loaded with a moderate amount of color and applied to the gesso surface. Here the first brushfuls of color were diluted with water and put on in thin washes that established the broad areas of color. Over these big areas the artist built up his painting with many small brushstrokes. This technique, called hatching, blends the colors together directly on the painting surface. It is a little like stitching or weaving with colored threads. The result is very clean, clear colors, shining through each other and blending in the eyes of the viewer.



Tempera painting is not a fast way of working. In fact it is a precise and time-consuming technique, but it has a quality of color and a lustrous matte surface that some artists consider well worth the time and effort involved in using the medium.

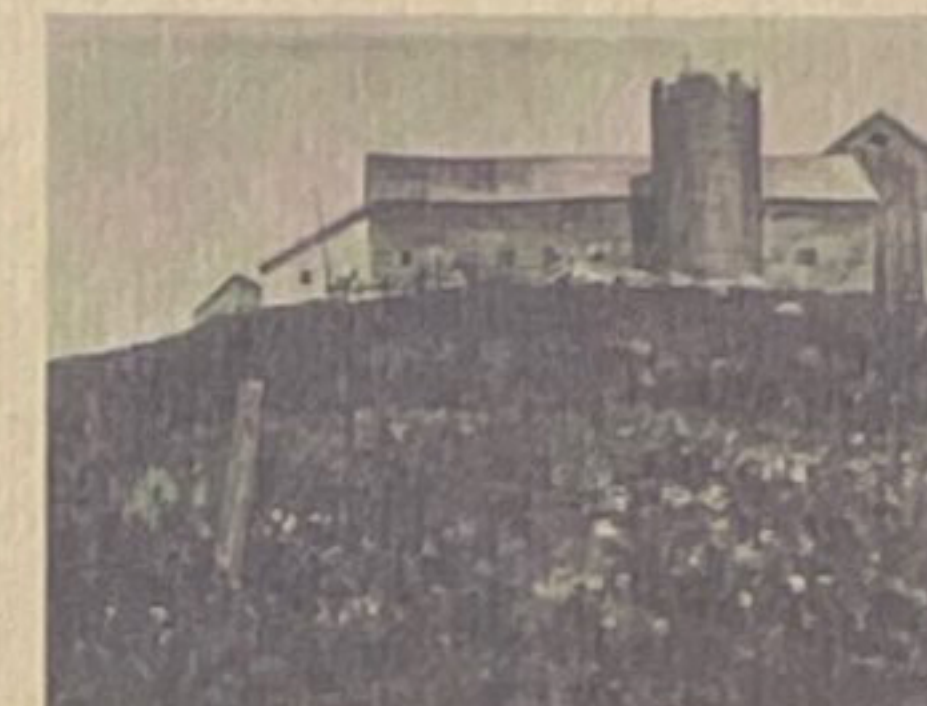
Polymer on gesso panel

Courtesy of the artist

Vermont Memorial, Franklin Jones

Materials:

Palette—enamel butcher's tray
Brushes—both small watercolor and bristle
Polymer paints
Gesso panel



The plastic paints, or polymers, are simple to use and very versatile. They come in either tubes or jars and have somewhat the same consistency as oil paints. Most polymers, however, are aqueous, which means that you thin them with water. When the color dries the paint film is tough, flexible, permanent and waterproof.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of polymer paints is the variety of ways they can be used. Thinned sufficiently with water, they are similar to watercolors; used straight or with polymer medium, they have qualities that are uniquely their own, but that, at the same time, make it possible to handle them much like oils.

There is some of all these techniques in *Vermont Memorial*. Franklin Jones has made use of underpainting, direct painting and glazes. The support, like that of Robert Levers' tempera painting, is a masonite panel with a gesso ground—in this case five or six coats. From beginning to end the artist gave careful consideration to the tonal values of the large areas. In the lights he simply retained the brightness of the gesso ground by applying thin transparent glazes of color. A thin wash of blue over creamy opaque underpainting produced the silvery luminosity of the sky. The underpainting of the grass and weeds in the foreground was broadly laid in with burnt umber and a large brush. Over this dark pattern Jones brushed washes of greens and yellows. The tiny bright blossoms in the grass and the precisely executed details of the barn were done last, with very small brushes.

Polymer underpainting and oil glazes

Honeymooners, Joseph Hirsch

Materials:

Stretched canvas with a polymer gesso ground
Polymer paints
Oil paints
Linseed oil, turpentine and damar varnish
Small cup for glazing medium
Oil brushes
Palette



Courtesy Forum Gallery, New York

The process of underpainting and glazing plays an important part in many of Joseph Hirsch's paintings. This one was

underpainted with polymer, over which color was applied by means of oil glazes.

Glazes are made by mixing small amounts of pigment with relatively large proportions of medium to form transparent tints. Equal amounts of linseed oil, turpentine, and damar varnish make an excellent glazing medium. Mix the ingredients in a small bottle and pour out into an oil cup on your palette as needed.



If a painter wants a certain light blue to be more lavender he might mix a little red or crimson with his medium and brush or rub (rags can be used for glazing) this mixture over the blue area. Or he might make a monochrome underpainting in black and white or umber and white, complete except for color, and add the colors by means of transparent glazes. The underpainting, of course, must be thoroughly dry, otherwise it will pick up under the glazing brush. Joseph Hirsch, like many other artists, uses polymer for underpainting because it dries rapidly and so reduces to a minimum the waiting time between underpainting and glazing.

The support for *Honeymooners* is a polymer gesso ground on canvas. Hirsch began the picture in the usual manner by transferring his preliminary drawing to the canvas. Then, with polymer paint, he developed the drawing and laid in the broad areas of color. When he had firmly established his composition and values in this underpainting, and it had dried, he was ready to work with oils. These he mixed with glazing medium and applied thinly in areas where he wanted the underpainting to show through. He used more pigment and less medium where he wished to make changes or build up form with direct painting. In this way he developed his picture, carrying it through to completion with oil glazes and direct oil painting over the polymer underpainting.

The glazing method can be used in painting with other mediums—polymer over polymer, watercolor over gouache, oil over oil, etc.—but it is not a good idea to put polymer over oil because the plastic paint does not always adhere permanently to an oily surface.

Polymer and oil

Run, Syd Solomon

Materials:

Polymer paints
Oil paints
Stretched canvas
Brushes
Rags
Palette knife

Courtesy Saldenberg
Gallery, New York



Vibrant color and dramatic color harmonies characterize Syd Solomon's paintings. Many, such as this one, are done with polymer paint, which he combines with oil glazes for even greater richness of color. His application is rapid and spontaneous. He uses brushes mainly, but also rags, palette knife, sponges and other improvised tools. In places the vari-

ety and subtlety of color relationships have been further enhanced by rubbing thin stains of polymer over the oil glazes after they have dried. As mentioned earlier, polymer paints do not adhere well to oily surfaces, and for this reason should not be applied heavily over oil paint.

Syd Solomon was a pioneer experimenter with polymer paints. He believes that an artist must know his materials so thoroughly that when he is painting he does not have to think about them as anything but the means for best achieving his purpose. For an example of how personal the use of a medium is and how the results vary from one artist to another, compare this painting with Joseph Hirsch's *Honeymooners* and Franklin Jones' *Vermont Memorial*, both of which are painted with polymer and glazes.

Gesso, casein, charcoal, conté crayon

Materials:

Gesso
Casein (opaque watercolor which is semipermanent when dry)
Conté crayon (a hard drawing crayon available in black, white and shades of brown)
Compressed charcoal
Masonite
Watercolor brushes
Palette
Razor blade
Kleenex
Polymer spray fixative

Courtesy of the artist



Figure, Jak Kovatch

Here the artist has combined some of the materials and techniques of drawing—charcoal and conté crayon—with those of painting—gesso and casein (opaque watercolor)—to produce a picture that has many characteristics of both mediums. On a masonite panel Kovatch applied gesso as a ground in certain areas, while in others he retained the color and texture of the raw masonite. Here and there he tinted the gesso before putting it on by adding casein colors. In this way the ground became not only a surface to paint on but an integral part of the composition. Over this he applied further washes of casein color, into which he drew with charcoal and conté crayon. This procedure was repeated until the artist arrived at the forms and shapes that satisfied him. In places he painted over the charcoal with clear water for a deliberately smeared effect, or rubbed with kleenex, or scraped with a razor blade. The finished picture was sprayed with polymer medium as a fixative. The materials—charcoal, crayon and casein—are simple and basic, but this is an example of how they can be used in a uniquely personal way.

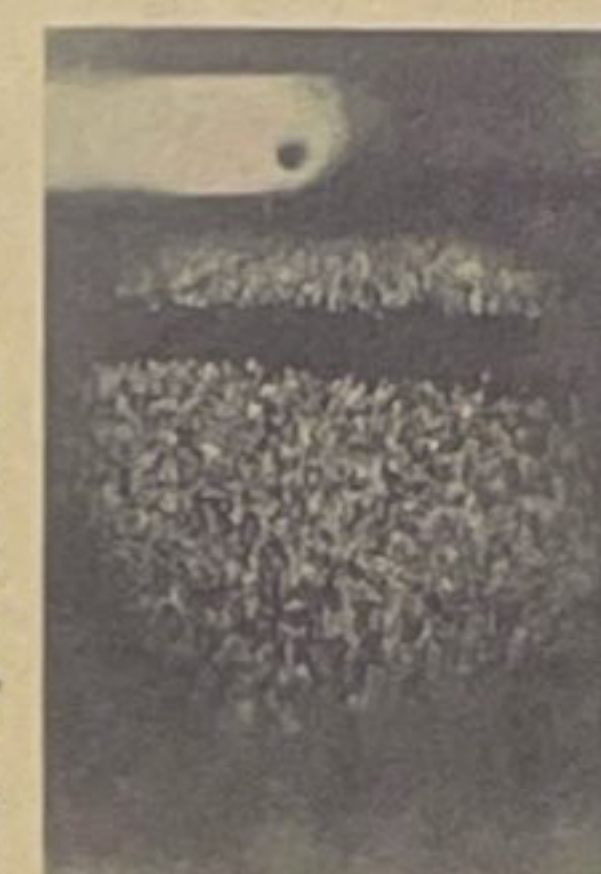
Dry pigment and polymer spray

Untitled, Tauno Kauppi

Materials:

Watercolor paper
Black powder or dry color
Polymer spray fixative
Garden hose

Courtesy of the artist



This luminous black-and-white picture might be called a watercolor, but not in the usual sense of the term. It was done in four steps. (1) A dense dusting of black powder (carbon)

was deposited on a piece of white watercolor paper. All of the surface except the large white area at the top was covered with this powdered carbon. (2) A polymer spray was applied over parts of the carbon-covered areas to fix them and make them impervious to water. (3) The paper was tacked to an outdoor wall, and sprayed with a garden hose. Those areas of carbon protected by the polymer fixative resisted the water. In the unprotected areas, however, the spray of water "spotted" the carbon, washing away little dots where it struck and exposing the white paper. (4) Finally, the entire picture was fixed with a polymer spray.

Ingeniously contrived treatments of this kind often result in textures, forms and effects that can't be achieved in any other way. The principle by which this picture was done is very simple—an unprotected surface (the powdered carbon) is vulnerable to water, whereas the fixed portions of the same surface are protected from the water and consequently unaffected by it. Tauno Kauppi constantly explores unconventional uses of both familiar and new materials. If you would like to experiment for yourself with the principle he used here you might try working with color for a start—putting dry pigments on paper or some other type of support, fixing the color in certain areas, and then assaulting the unfixed areas with water spray. An unconventional approach of this kind can be very helpful in opening the way to discoveries of your own unique methods and uses of materials.

Oil pastels and gouache

City Harbor, Austin Briggs

Materials:

Oil pastels
Gouache (opaque watercolor, designers colors or poster paint)
Polymer medium
Tracing paper
Watercolor brushes
Palette

Reprinted from *Lithopinion* 3



Austin Briggs made the preliminary drawing for this New York harbor scene with pencil on tracing paper. When he had established his composition he turned the paper over. With the pencil sketch showing through in reverse, he used oil pastels to further develop the drawing, introduce details, and begin to suggest color. Now he flipped the paper back to the side on which he had done the original pencil drawing, fastened it flat over a piece of illustration board, and began to work with gouache, mixing it with polymer medium to give the paints strength and permanence. Working on both sides of the paper in this way kept the oil pastels and the gouache physically separate. It also helped give a slightly hazy effect, typical of New York City on even many clear days. But, above all, this unconventional method helped the artist work in a fresh, spontaneous way and freed him from the fixed habits that result from sticking to just one preferred medium.

Hard-edge painting

Materials:

Polymer paints
Brushes
Palette—preferably a muffin tin with separate compartments for mixing colors
Masking tape
Canvas or gesso panel



Here is an example of a very different kind of picture—a carefully planned, precisely executed hard-edge composition

of flat shapes. The design and color combinations are usually preplanned in a small sketch or diagram before transferring to the canvas or gesso panel. Polymer is especially convenient for painting in this way, although almost any medium can be used. Masking tape is a convenient aid in quickly and easily painting the sharp clean edges between the forms. Because polymer dries rapidly an area can be taped over shortly after the paint has been applied, thus making it possible to paint an adjoining area without prolonged waiting. It's important to press the tape firmly on the canvas and to mix the paints fairly thickly. This will prevent the paint from bleeding under the tape and will also assure a smooth, opaque coat of paint. Apply the paint in clean, even strokes, allowing it to dry before removing the masking tape. Or you may want to spray on the paint, using spray enamel that can be purchased in a wide range of colors. Masking tape simplifies painting intricate patterns, such as the narrow stripes in this composition. Two crisp-edged colors, side by side, create a vibrant blending in the eyes of the viewer. An alternating blue and red stripe, for example, can give the illusion of a pulsating purple.

Try various hard-edge combinations of patterns and colors in any medium you like to work with—polymer, cut-out Color-aid paper, colored plastic adhesive tapes, tempera. You'll find it an exciting way to explore new interpretations of form and color relationships.

Melted crayons on pebbleboard

Waiting, Bert Dodson

Materials:

Several boxes of children's crayons
Hot plate
Old pan
Electric iron
Old brushes
Clear wax
Mat board with pebble surface

Courtesy of the artist



The use of wax as a binding and medium for color is a very old practice. The ancient Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans worked with wax paints and some artists still do to this day. The medium is called encaustic. The word means *burned in*, or *prepared by heat*, which is exactly how colors are mixed with wax and then fused with each other on the painting surface. Here the artist has used wax crayons for a modern variation of the encaustic process.

He made a preliminary drawing on the pebbleboard. Then he peeled the paper wrapping from the crayons. By pushing the wax crayons against the hot iron he dripped color onto the pebbleboard until the main areas were covered. At this stage he began using the hot iron to "draw" and add detail, dripping more color and fusing it into the surface as the work progressed. Now, with the principal forms and shapes established, he heated clear wax in a pan, to make transparent glazes, adding just enough crayon to give it color. The glazes he applied with a brush while they were hot and liquid. The larger the proportion of clear wax, the more transparent the glaze. Surfaces can be built up quite heavily with successive glazes. Wax colors are clear and brilliant and, one of the advantages of encaustic, they remain this way indefinitely.

Another way you can prepare a wax medium is to melt beeswax in a pan and mix dry color with it. Keeping the wax paint hot while you work, apply it to your surface, illustration board or a gesso panel, with regular bristle brushes.

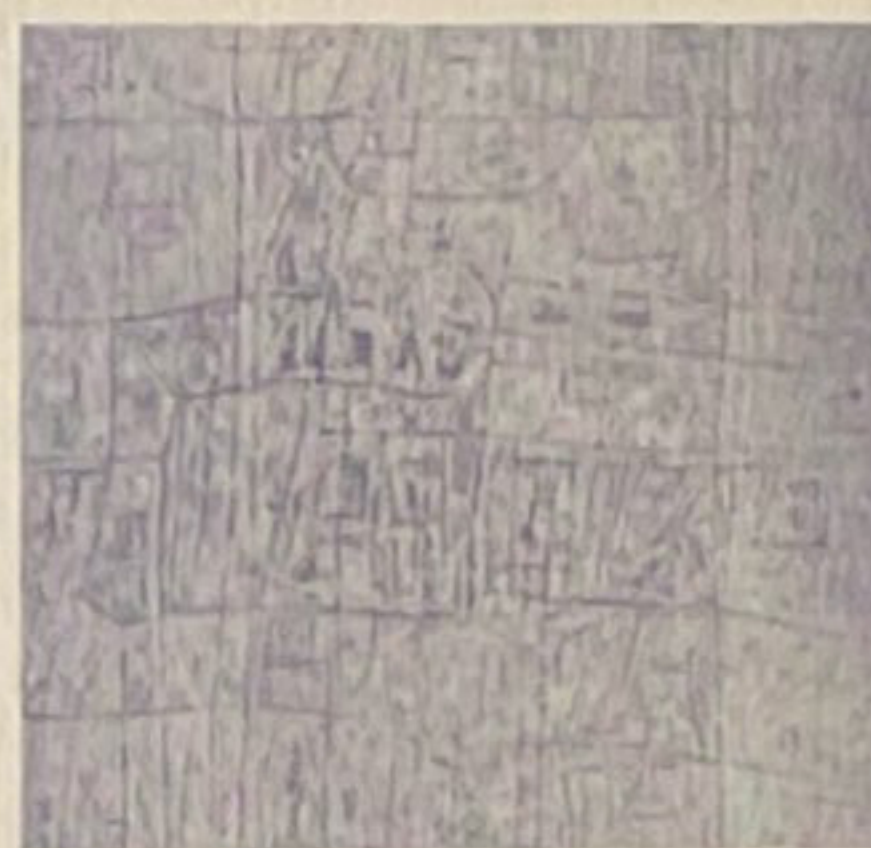
Oils (heavily applied)

White Painting, George Morrison

Materials:

Oil paint on canvas
Palette knife

Audubon Artists 25th
Annual, 1967, New York
Albert Dorne Purchase Award



Oil painting is usually done with brushes, but surfaces and textures can be greatly varied with the help of other tools, particularly flexible painting knives of various shapes and sizes. The interesting surface of this predominantly white painting was achieved by laying the pigment on with a knife, in somewhat the same way a plasterer deftly trowels on plaster. First, however, the artist underpainted areas with bright color. When the underpainting was dry he began building up the textural surface with white. The "drawing," or linear divisions of flat forms, was created by leaving fissures between areas of impasto paint. In these openings can be seen flecks and flashes of the bright orange, blue and green underpainting.

Many painters find it very satisfying to put on paint in a tactile way, controlling the surface with their painting implements and experiencing the direct feel of their materials as they work. Sticks, brush handles, rags, bits of wood, and various things not ordinarily thought of as painting tools also can be used for getting different surface effects. For extremely rough textures sand is sometimes mixed with paint, or the surface is built up with a heavy coat of polymer modeling paste. In this way a painting may border on the sculptural, some of its forms actually having three dimensions, like a low relief.

Miscellaneous mediums

There is no end to the materials and combinations of materials that can be used as long as an artist works with them in a creative and imaginative way.

Plaster cast

Tracks, Gillian Jagger

Materials:

Plaster of Paris
Water
Mixing pan
Oil or soap
Clay, plasticene, or a few strips of wood
or cardboard

Courtesy of the artist



Gillian Jagger is an artist who finds design, meaning and beauty in many commonplace textures, such as these tire tracks, which she has arranged alongside of hoof prints, for contrast in patterns and a visual comment on contrast in transportation. If you look around you carefully you will find interesting surfaces that you may consider worth converting into works of art. The procedure is quite simple. All you need is the materials we have listed. The surface you are going to take an imprint from should be fairly level. Enclose the chosen area with a wall of plasticene three or four inches high. Strips of wood or cardboard can be used instead, but make sure the corners are snug enough to keep the wet plaster from running out. Grease the entire surface with a coat of oil or soap. This is to keep the plaster from sticking after it has set.

Now you are ready to mix your plaster. The best guide here will be the instructions usually printed on the bag or box in which the dry plaster is purchased. In general they call for putting a given volume of water—let us say a quart—into a pan. To this add a double volume of plaster, sifting it into the water until the mixture has a creamy consistency. Stirring should be kept to a minimum as it forms bubbles that will weaken the plaster when it sets. Plaster and water are inexpensive, so be sure to mix enough for the job. Once the plaster is mixed you must work rapidly, because in ten or fifteen minutes it will begin to harden. Pour an even coat of wet plaster over the enclosed surface, filling it to the top of the retaining walls. The plaster will quickly set, but if possible allow it at least an hour to harden. At the end of this time remove the retaining walls and carefully pull the plaster from the surface. You now have a negative mold. By greasing or oiling this, and pouring in any casting material, such as another batch of plaster, spackling compound, papier-mâché, etc., you will obtain an exact replica of the original textured surface.

A variation of this technique consists of working directly in wet plaster. A piece of plywood or masonite makes a good base. Enclose it with a two- or three-inch wall of plasticene or wood strips. Pour in the wet plaster. While it is setting, texture it with patterns of your own invention. Use an old comb or fork, sticks, sea shells, or even a finger. Watercolor washes can be painted into the wet plaster. You can also set objects into the plaster as it hardens—scraps of wood, stones, anything that will lend shape, texture, pattern, or color.

Collage

*Where Were You on
August 25, 1914?* Bob Peak

Materials:

Watercolors
Brushes
Palette
Lace
Old photographs
Spray adhesive or rubber cement
Rice paper



This picture and the next combine collage with painting and drawing, but, as you can see, they are very different from one another in concept and manner of execution. Bob Peak began his nostalgic composition by painting the two central figures in watercolor on rice paper. (He chose this kind of paper to paint on because it is extremely soft and absorbent and creates a slightly misty effect, which he wanted here.) There were no preliminary sketches; Peak built his picture around the figures, using spray adhesive to glue the lace and old photographs. Study the collage closely and note the ingenious details such as the flower on the lady's hat, which is a baby's portrait, and the photographs of the tiny figure and automobile, that might be a stickpin in the gentleman's tie.

Collage is a remarkably versatile method of artistic expression. As long as you have the right materials, you can use them to say just about anything you want to. Often you'll come upon an object that, by its own nature, will spark an idea for a theme. Let that happen.

Collage

Gap, Michael Mitchell

Materials:

Charcoal and pencil drawings
Plywood door
Magazine clippings
Spray paint
Gesso
Brushes (large)
Polymer medium



Michael Mitchell's approach to collage is quite different from Bob Peak's. His combination of gluing, drawing and painting was done on a plywood flush door (these are obtainable, ready-made, from most lumberyards or builder's supply outlets), which he covered with two or three coats of polymer gesso.

On top of the gesso he applied polymer medium as an adhesive. The things he glued to this surface include his own charcoal and pencil drawings on paper, over which he painted further coats of medium to fix them and make them an integral part of the surface. In the painted areas the artist used brushes and in some cases spray paint. Other objects are a large numeral torn from a magazine, an even larger gilded plastic letter G, gold leaf, etc.

This choice of materials resulted from a free association of ideas and symbols, and his feeling for shapes and forms. In some places he painted and drew over the materials after gluing them in place—in others he merely tacked them to the surface, deliberately leaving the placement open to further arrangement, thereby allowing himself an indefinitely continuing involvement with the picture.

There are no fixed rules in regard to collage materials and how they can be used. Try photographs, pieces of colored paper, cloth, clippings from newspapers and magazines—anything, in fact, that you can adapt to the expression of your ideas.

Relief construction

I.B.M. J.U.N.K., Grisha Dotzenko

Materials:

Computer cards
Mat knife
Glue
Cardboard
Spray paint



Constructions like this require more imagination than material! The discarded computer cards were cut into strips of different widths and lengths with a mat knife; some were cut with irregular curves, but each had one edge left straight. They were assembled in several packs and with an eye to the varied up-and-down dimensions were glued to a heavy cardboard backing.

When the glue had set, the whole construction was sprayed with gold paint. A construction of this type can be made with an easy-to-cut material such as metal sheeting or balsa wood. (The materials, of course, will dictate the appropriate adhesive.)

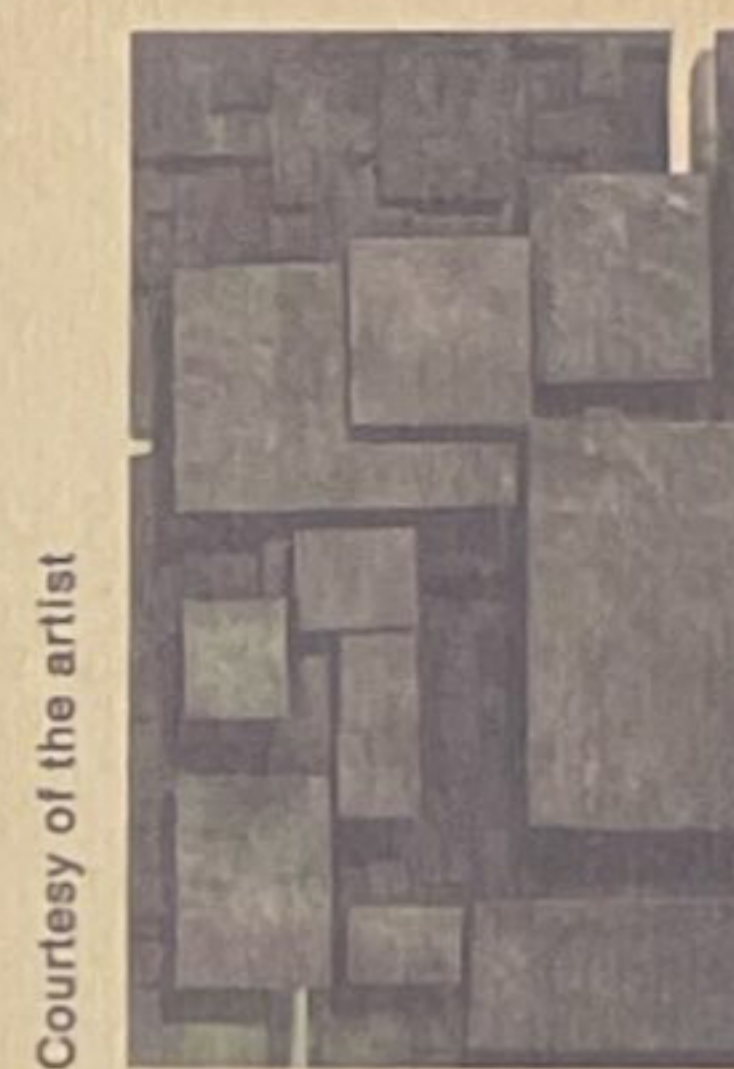
Like all textural art forms, relief construction gains vitality from the play of light over its many surfaces.

Relief construction

Red x Five, Grisha Dotzenko

Materials:

Plywood
Wood scraps and sawdust
Hammer and nails
Spray paint
Palette knife
Household paint



Small scraps of wood from a lumberyard have been arranged to make an arresting three-dimensional piece. The artist first nailed four boards to a plywood base, purposely leaving spaces between the boards to show depth and to create a relationship of surfaces. He then affixed small pieces of wood to the boards and placed other pieces in separate raised units which compose the overall arrangement. When the artist was pleased with the whole layered look, he applied three or four coats of paint as a base, occasionally applying a mixture of paint and sawdust with a palette knife to add texture to some pieces.

The artist then sprayed orange red enamel evenly and thinly; next he used cherry red enamel, a darker color which he sprayed particularly in crevices and shadowy areas. Not quite satisfied, he masked off some parts, and again sprayed the frontal pieces with another coat of orange red to make them seem to come forward even more than they do in actuality.

Assemblage—tin cans

Americana, Tauno Kauppi

Materials:

Rusty tin cans
Plywood
Dry pigment
Plastic (polyester and epoxy)
Trowel



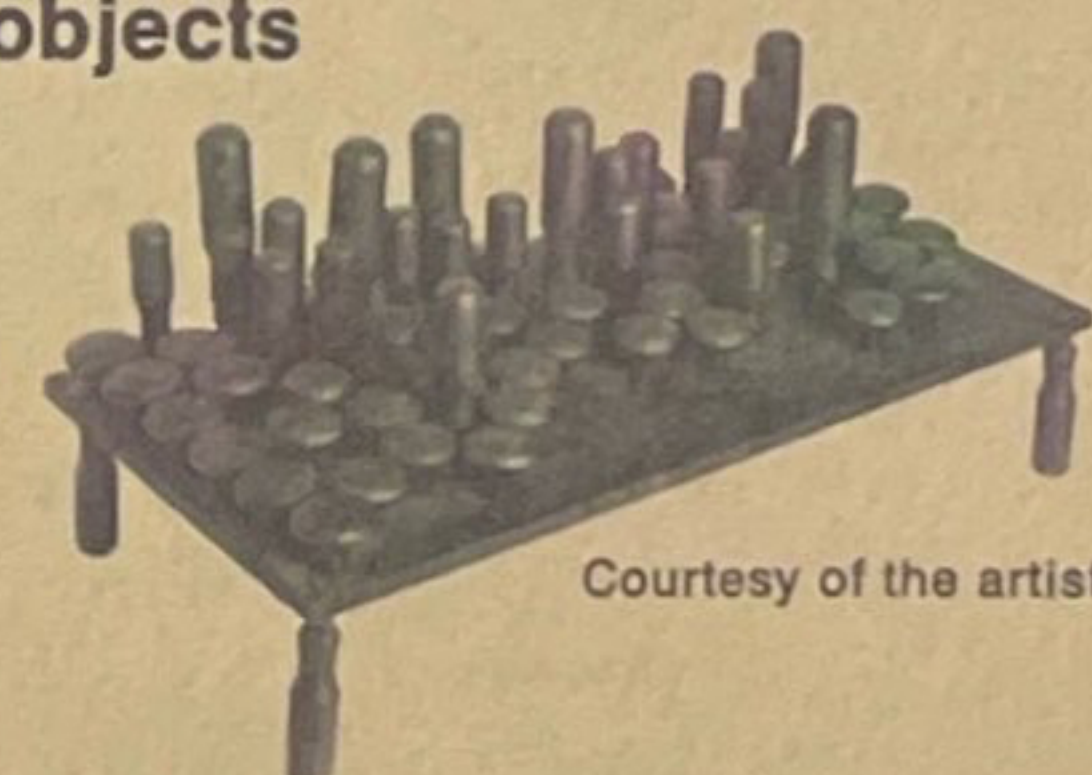
An artist can often see beauty in what others consider commonplace and ugly—these rusty tin cans, for example, that Tauno Kauppi has assembled into a handsome composition. He used the cans exactly as he found them, without additional shaping or coloring. The support for this assemblage was a piece of plywood, braced with strips of wood in the back. On the flat surface of the plywood he troweled a heavy plastic coating, consisting of polyester and epoxy in a workable, buttery state. He treated the crushed and bent rusty cans as though they were brushstrokes of paint—placing them in harmonious juxtaposition as suggested by their variations in shape and color. The plastic—which he colored by adding dry pigment—acted as a powerful glue, fixing the cans firmly in place as it set.

Assemblage—wood objects

Forest Floor, Ed Reinhardt

Materials:

Tool handles
Drawer pulls
Piece of plywood
Black paint
Drill
Glue



With a little imagination and enterprise many objects intended for utilitarian purposes can easily be made into ob-

jects of art. Here a number of ordinary drawer pulls and tool handles of various shapes and sizes comprise the principal elements of a decorative assemblage. After carefully planning the placement of the objects Ed Reinhardt drilled a hole for each one in the plywood base. The ends of the handles were fitted into the holes and glued in place. Four of the tool handles were fastened to the reverse side of the base, one at each corner, to act as legs. The completed construction was painted dull black with spray paint.

Movable painting

Four Surprises, Grisha Dotzenko

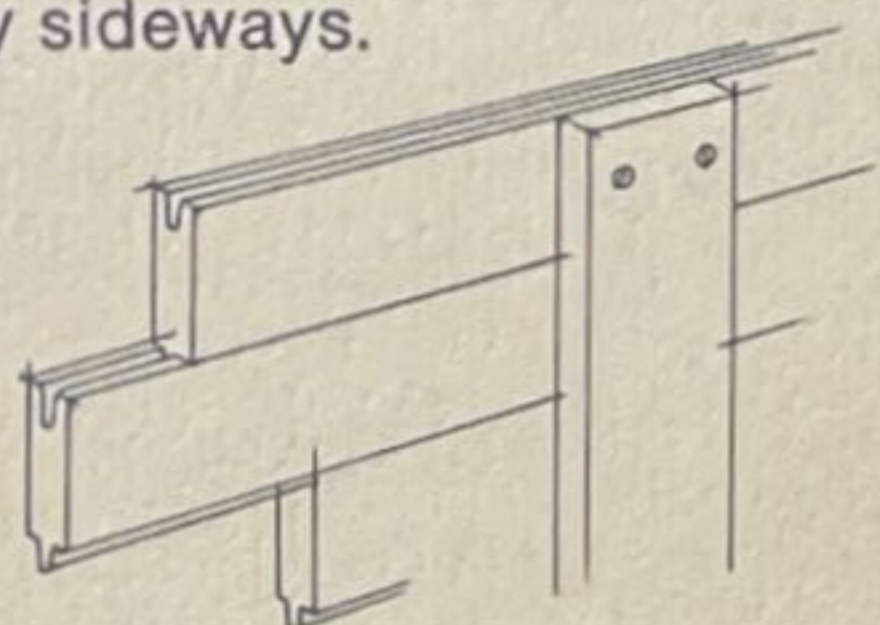
Materials:

Tongue-in-groove boards
Screws
Spray paint
Masking tape
Hammer and nails

Courtesy of the artist



The artist's prime interest in making movable paintings is to involve the viewer to the fullest. The spectator is not passive, but can participate in this artwork, even sliding panels himself to create changes of design and shape. The artist first made a little sketch to decide on colors and design. The tongue-in-groove boards were then put together and screwed with two screws at both the top and bottom to a vertical supporting board to hold them fast and to allow the middle panels to slide freely sideways.



Additional screws are used wherever else they're needed to hold the pieces together, depending on the design and size of the movable painting. Using masking tape for a clean-edged design, the artist then sprayed paint in the colors he had already decided on.

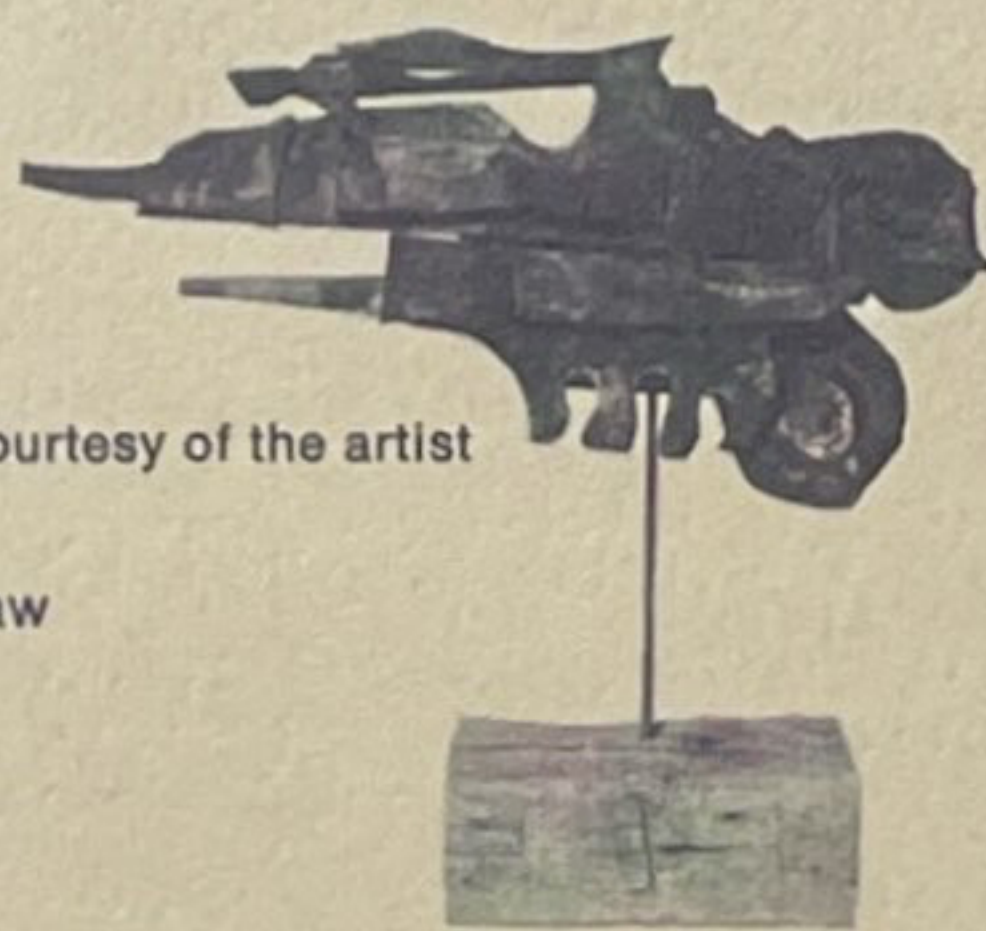
Wood construction

Figurescape, Leonard Besser

Materials:

Random pieces of wood
Electric saber saw or hand jigsaw
Hammer and nails
Spray paint or blowtorch

Courtesy of the artist



The artist's basic materials were two rough planks from a packing crate. He used an electric saber saw to cut out the various pieces (a coping saw could be used as a substitute).



The shapes are based on human anatomy, which they suggest rather than imitate, just as the assembled pieces suggest a human figure rather than realistically portray one. Both positive and negative shapes were used. A small board



served as a central core, to both sides of which these elements were nailed. The final color (black) and texture (rough and charred) were achieved by burning with a blowtorch. A simpler and safer way to add color would be with brush and paint or paint spray.

Sand casting

Courtesy of the artist

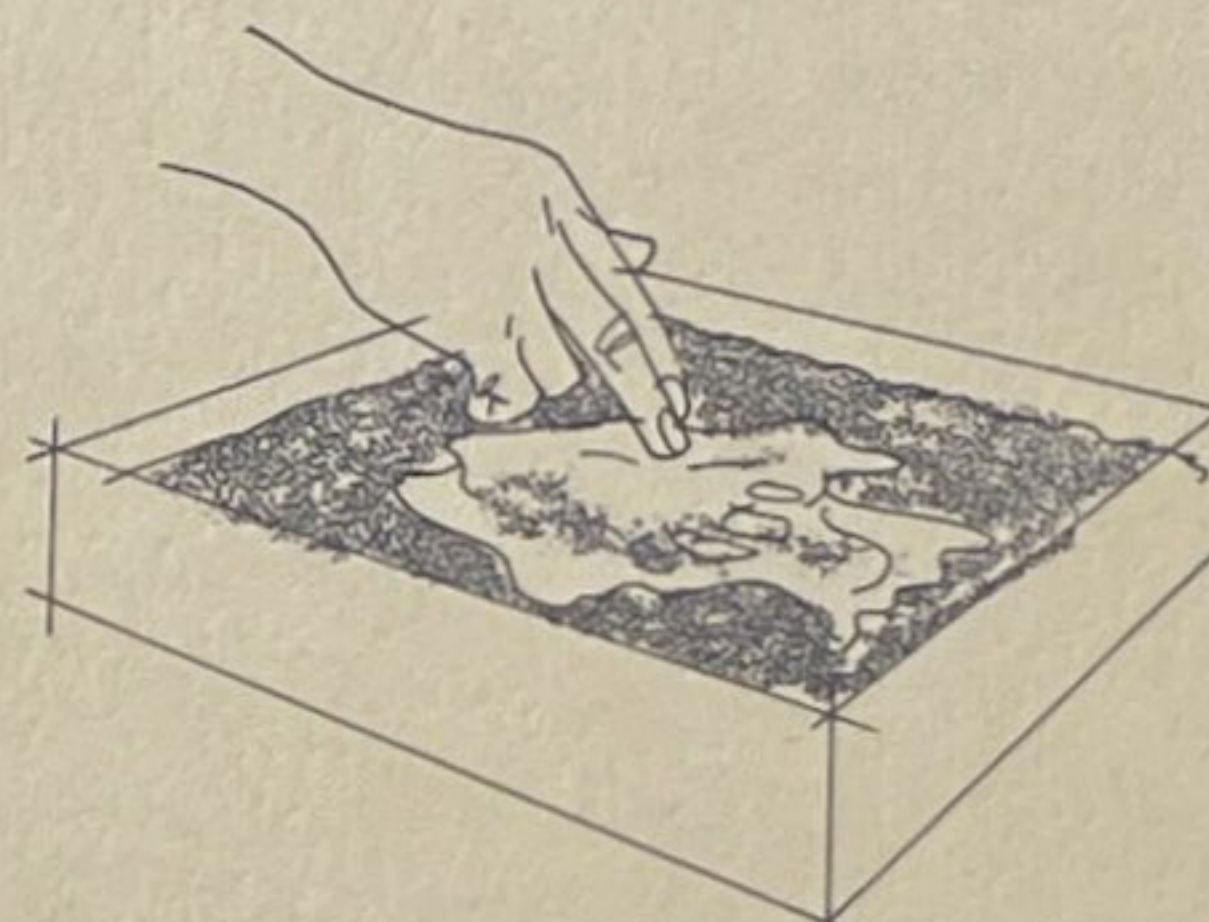
Piranha, Grisha Dotzenko

Materials:

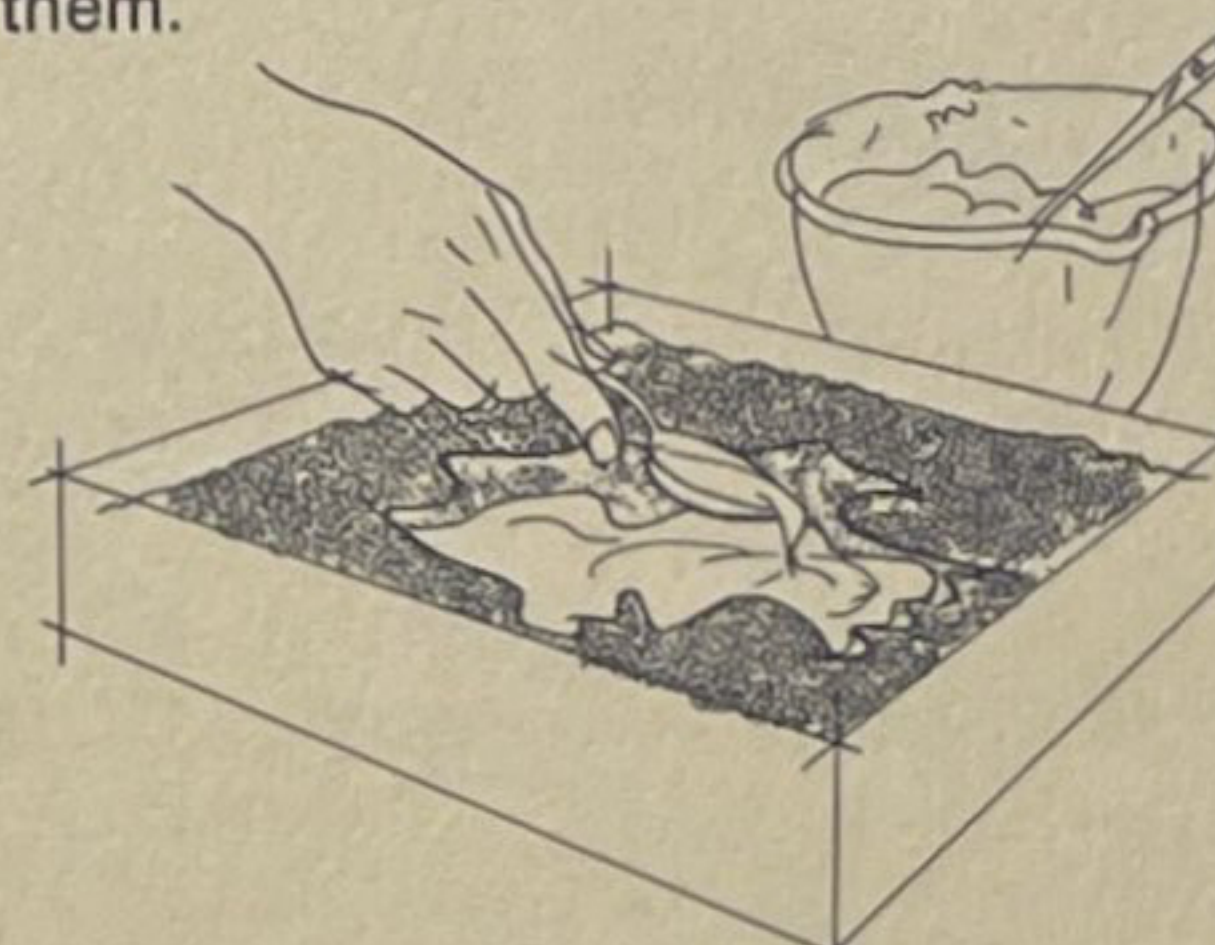
Sand
Wood or cardboard box
Plaster of Paris
Water
Mixing pan
Piece of wire mesh



To make the sand casting of the fish, the artist used a shallow box with sides three or four inches high which he filled with damp sand to within about an inch and a half of the top. Next he made a negative mold by digging out some of the sand and shaping the form with the help of a stick and a spoon.



He mixed the plaster of Paris with water in the pan, then dribbled the wet plaster, using the spoon as well as his hands, into the depressions of the mold, being careful not to injure them.



He poured in more plaster, filling the box nearly to the top. While the plaster was setting, he pressed a piece of wire mesh into its top surface to give it strength and provide a means of attaching a wire with which he could later hang up the finished casting on a wall.

When the plaster was completely hardened he lifted it out of the box. Some of the loose sand stuck to the surface of the casting, giving it a rough, granulated texture. (He finished his casting by brushing off the excess sand with an old toothbrush.)

Assemblage

Secret, Sam's Shoes, Relic, Paul Camacho

Materials:

Assorted objects
Glue
Nails

Courtesy of the artist



When Paul Camacho begins to work on an assemblage, he gathers together the things he has chosen and places them on his work table, where he can really look at them, studying the possible relationships of each object to the others. He shifts these things around until he achieves an arrangement that truly pleases him. Then he draws a diagram of his plan and also writes down the step-by-step order of the arrangement, numbering each part and noting when glue is required or when small nails are needed to make permanent his assemblage.

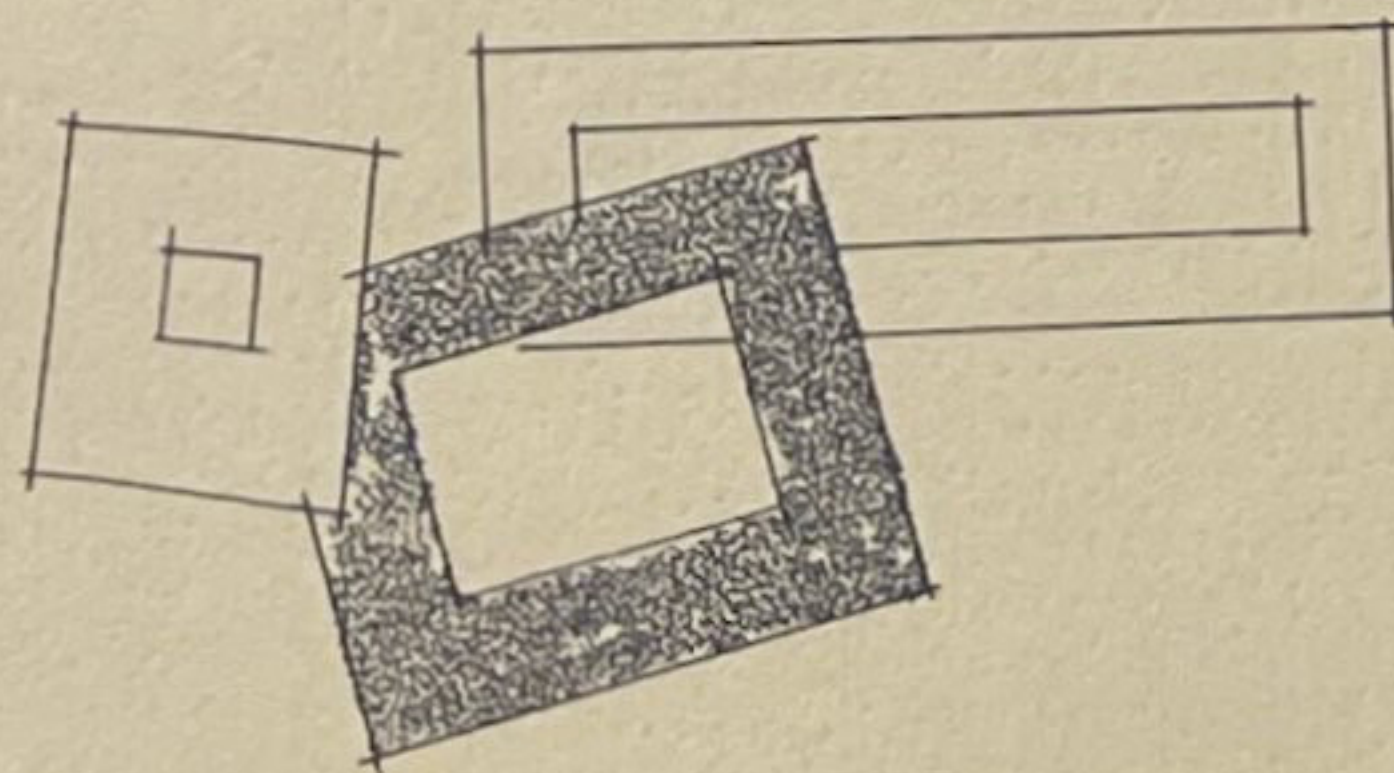
Matting a picture

Materials:

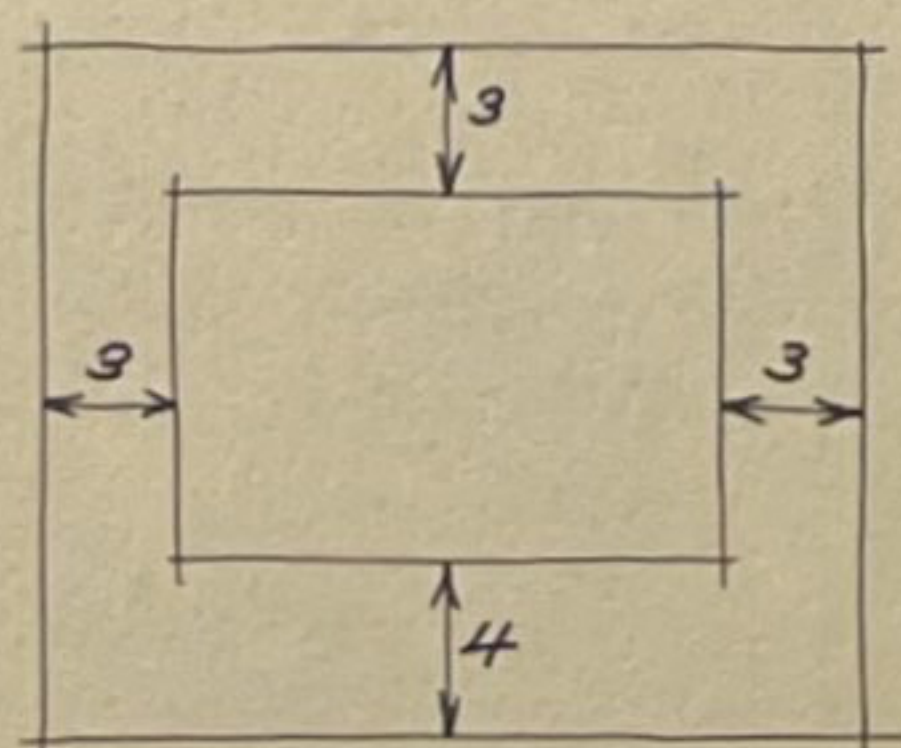
Sharp knife
Mat board
Straightedge, metal;
or wood with a metal edge
Masking tape or rubber cement

Some works of art, when finished, can be hung on the wall or otherwise displayed just as they are, without further embellishment. Others, however, will be greatly enhanced by some kind of setting. In the case of drawings, watercolors, gouaches and prints—in fact, most pictures done on paper—a mat is the best solution.

A mat is a flat piece of cardboard—usually white or off-white, but sometimes colored—with an opening cut into it to reveal the picture. The size and proportions of the mat for a particular picture will be determined by your own good judgment.



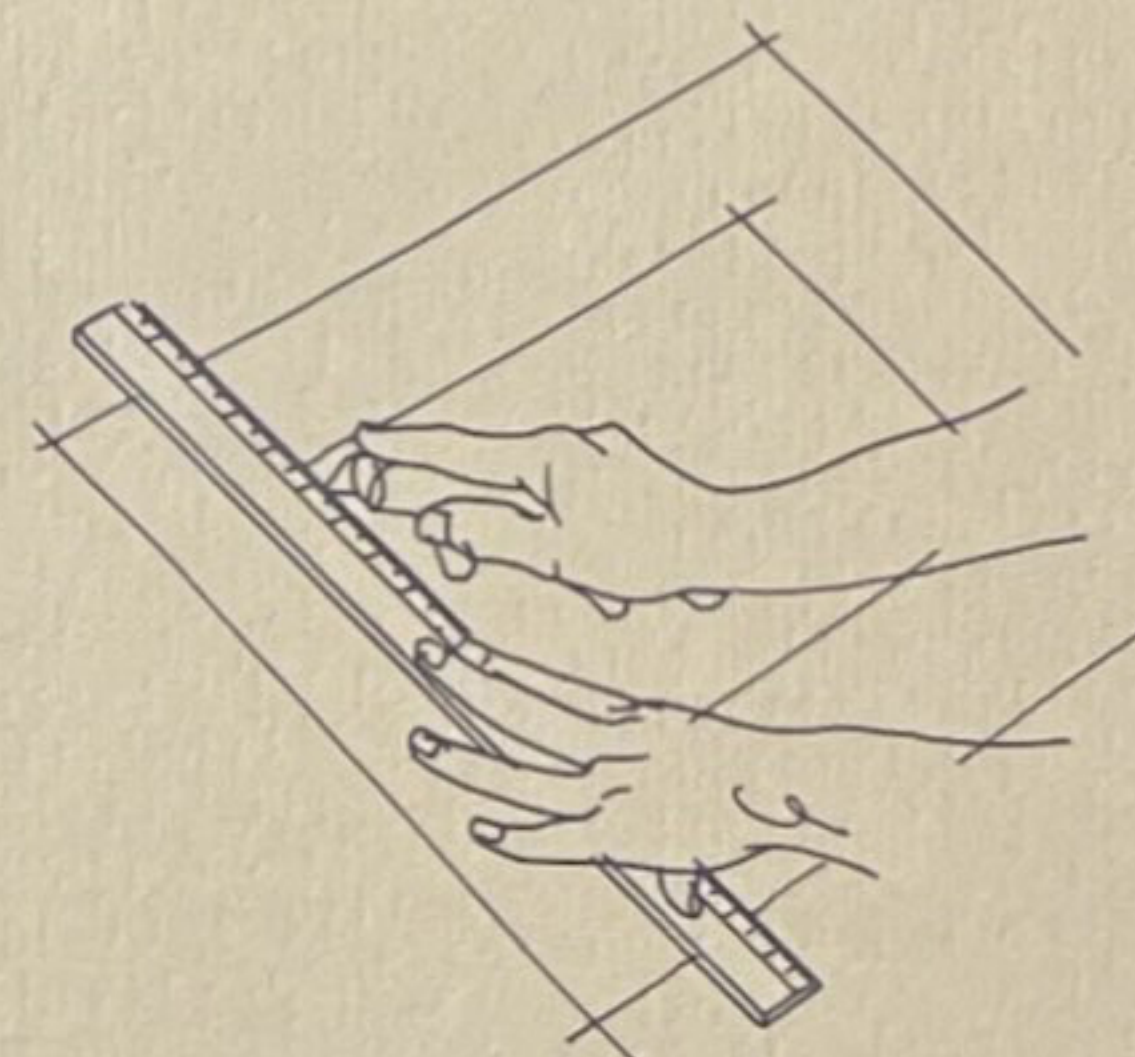
The only rules in the first step are: (1) Don't make the mat too skimpy in width, and (2) be sure to make the bottom at least an inch or two wider than the sides and top. This is to compensate for an optical illusion that makes the bottom look narrower when all sides are equal in width. These proportions are about average.



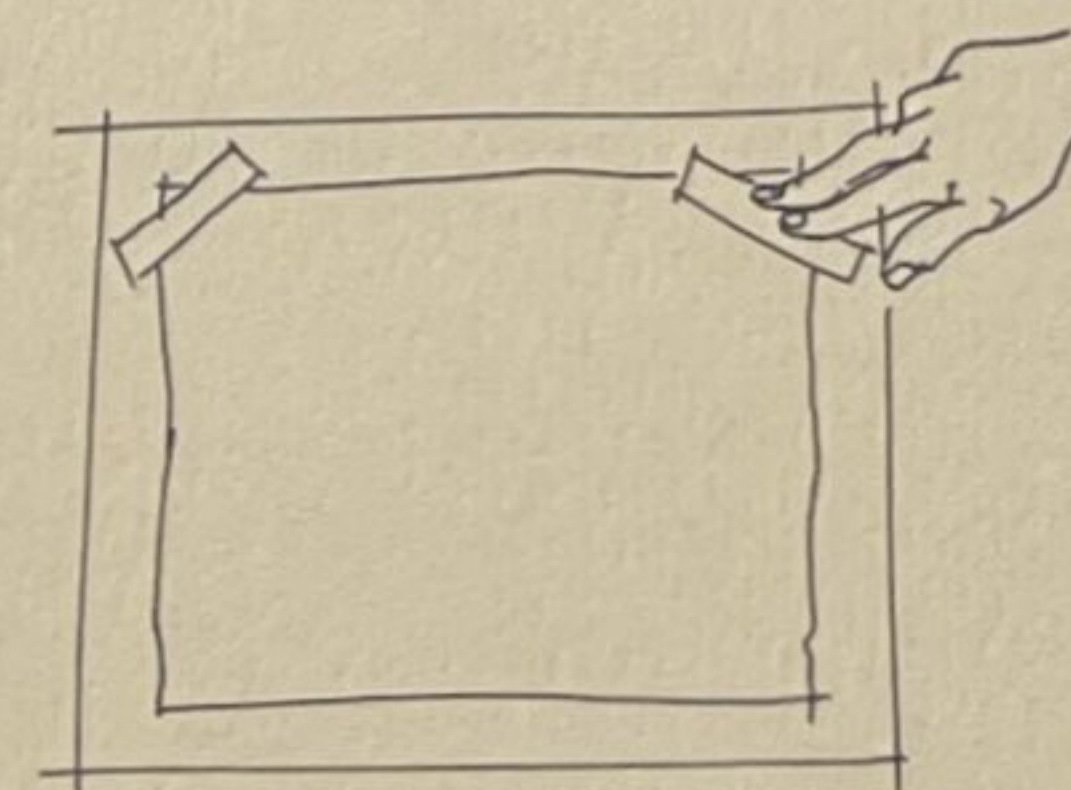
The opening you are going to cut should be a fraction of an inch shorter on each side than the picture in order to

cover its edges. Measure the dimensions of the opening accurately with your ruler and draw the lines with pencil. If you do the measuring and cutting from the back it will help you keep the face of the board clean.

To cut, lay the mat on a solid flat surface. Place a piece of smooth scrap cardboard under the mat to protect both it and the surface on which it is lying. Be sure the surface is clean, especially if you are working from the back of the mat. Place the straightedge along the marked lines to use as a guide for the knife and hold firmly while cutting. Cut with a continuous motion and steady pressure. You may have to repeat each cut several times, so be sure to keep the straightedge firmly in place until the knife has completely penetrated the board.



Be particularly careful at the corners. When all four sides have been cut so that the cuts meet precisely at the corners, the center of the mat board will drop out, leaving an opening into which your picture will fit. To complete the mounting, place the picture on a piece of cardboard that is equal in size to the overall size of the mat. Center the picture face down



on the back of the mat and fasten it with two pieces of masking tape at the upper corners only. This will allow it to hang freely and prevent buckling.

Framing

If you wish to put your mounted picture in a frame, or under glass, a number of types of simple and very good-looking frames, either with or without glass, are available in many five-and-ten and department stores at nominal prices.

A great deal of thought and effort goes into making a good work of art and when it is finished the artist has every right to be proud of his accomplishment. But art is a two-way proposition, a way of communication, and no successful painting or piece of sculpture is quite complete until it is looked at and appreciated by somebody other than the artist. For this reason a work of art deserves to be seen under advantageous conditions. Even the best pictures look better when properly mounted. Good lighting is important too—so is every attention, in fact, that helps the viewer see and enjoy the work at its best. The respect that an artist shows in this way for his own work helps win for it the respect of others.

Assignment Section 16 Materials of expression

Important

These instructions are extremely important to you. Read them through carefully from start to finish. Do your assignment work only after you have thoroughly studied the text.

"The subject matter of painting includes the materials of expression." *Stuart Davis*

To send to the School

Section 16 assignment work

Here's an assignment that can be the most exciting one yet. And it's more than likely to be if you follow our advice and give your imagination free rein.

This section is about using new and varied materials and mediums. Read it carefully. You'll find that the range of medium possibilities is unlimited. When you do the assignment, don't be content with the first thing you think of. Experiment!

We want you to do a piece of art on any subject you wish. Work with a brand-new medium that *you've never used before*.

Because of the mailing problem, don't use breakable items; fix the mediums that might smear, and make sure that any assemblage will stay together in transit. You may work any size, but it must fit into the 16 x 20-inch mailing carton.

Print on the back of your work:

Your name

Student number

Address

Assignment number

(over, please)

Cut along this line — and mail with your assignment

Section 16 Materials of expression

Comment sheet

In order for us to better understand your work, tell us in the space below how you think the materials you used have contributed to the effect or mood you have created.

Name

Student number

Date

Check before mailing

Your assignment carton should contain:

- 1 piece of artwork of any subject in any *new* medium
- 1 comment sheet (on other side of this page)
- 1 shipping label filled out completely with your name and address

Mail this carton to:

Famous Artists School
Westport, Connecticut 06880

Note: Be *sure* your work is thoroughly dry before mailing.